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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

FRENCH policy in the last week has taken a double turn. First came the Reparation Commission's proposal to institute a two-fold inquiry into the restoration of German financial stability, and the possibility of laying hands on Germany's exported capital. That was followed on Wednesday by the official announcement in Paris of new tactics in the occupied area, consisting of a partial withdrawal or regrouping of French troops, so as to bring them less in contact with the population, and the promise of a release of a number of political prisoners. These changes were to coincide with the full abandonment of passive resistance, interpreted by General Degoutte as implying the general resumption of work in the factories and mines, and the proper staffing of the French *Régie* lines by German railwaymen. While these concessions represent, incidentally, a partial redemption of the pledges given by M. Poincaré to Mr. Baldwin in September, they are probably to be interpreted as a calculated endeavour by the French Premier to persuade his people that all is now well in the Ruhr and the Rhineland. Since France is still spending much more than she is getting, some such demonstration is no doubt timely. How far it will attain its object has yet to be seen. Meanwhile the necessary framework for a French industrial annexation of the Ruhr has been completed.

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As to the Reparation Commission's proposal, it may, on the face of it, mean a good deal or nothing. The part to which the French attach chief importance, the inquest on German deposits in foreign banks, can have small intrinsic value. Banks are not only not required but not entitled to give information about their clients' business, and though in some Allied countries there may be means of securing the desired information, it is not mainly in Allied countries that German capital finds refuge. So far as neutral banks are concerned, particularly Latin American, there is no reason whatever why they should reveal business secrets which they have a clear obligation to guard inviolate. There

remains the proposal to consider means of putting Germany financially on her feet. As it is barely a month, or even less, since M. Poincaré flatly refused an inquiry on the Hughes lines, it may be presumed that he no more means to tolerate discussions of the total obligation to-day than he did then, for he can hardly contemplate declining a proposal when America puts it forward and then advancing it himself. Into this aspect of the situation America is making searching inquiries, and her decision as to co-operation in the conversations has yet to be taken. Sir John Bradbury seems to consider the Barthou proposition a step forward, and so possibly it may be. But a great deal of doubt enshrouds it yet.

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IN Germany a new Chancellor has in the end been discovered in the person of Dr. Wilhelm Marx, a Centre Party lawyer of moderate views but of no particular distinction. He registered his first qualified success by failing to fall, as he might have done, on the first or second day of the Reichstag session. At the moment of writing it seems as though the difficulty of re-enacting the Emergency Powers Bill carried by Dr. Stresemann (who remains as Foreign Minister) may be surmounted by a compromise, accepted by the Socialists, under which every measure promulgated under the emergency powers shall be submitted first to a Reichstag Committee of fifteen sitting in secret. The Emergency Powers Bill needs a two-thirds majority, and without Socialist support its rejection would be certain. The only course then would be a dissolution and elections under impossible conditions, a development which could do the Socialists in particular no good. With it all a curious revival of spirits, reflected in, or provoked by, a fairly substantial improvement in the mark exchange, is being manifested. The only solid grounds for any relaxation of pessimism are the unexpected success of the new Rentenmark currency and the undisguised American approval of the projected German food loan, to be spent mainly in importing foodstuffs from the United States.

This, of course, has to be approved by the Reparation Commission, and, to be negotiable, must be given priority over all other claims on Germany.

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THE Hungarian Loan proposal comes before the Council of the League of Nations next week, but considerable progress has been made with it already, the Financial Commission of the League having just adopted unanimously a lengthy and comprehensive scheme which appears to dispose of all preliminary obstacles on the technical side. Hungary's situation financially is not as desperate as Austria's was, and the League's Commission considers that a loan of £10,400,000 should suffice, though the Hungarians themselves hoped for half as much again. The Budget must, of course, be balanced, and the currency stabilized, and the Finance Minister, Dr. Kallay, has announced on his return to Hungary from London that for the latter purpose an internal loan will be attempted. The League's scheme provides for the restoration of general stability in about 2½ years—an estimate which, having regard to the consistency with which the Financial Commission's calculations concerning Austria are being justified, commands considerable respect. It now remains to be seen whether the political difficulties can be smoothed out as easily as the technical. Dr. Benes and M. Nintchitch are doing all they reasonably can to help, but the Jugo-Slav Foreign Minister finds his own Government none too amenable, and the Rumanians are apt to be more *difficile* still. Nor is Hungary herself altogether easy to handle. The Nationalist movement there is strong, and there will be opposition to the financial supervision the League is bound to institute. But Count Bethlen is showing a good deal of statesmanship, and the outlook is, on the whole, hopeful.

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REUTER'S AGENCY, which usually shows more discretion, was last week responsible for a German armament scare on the approved "Matin" and "Daily Mail" model. Fortunately or otherwise, the British public's nerves were, so far as the readers of more responsible journals are concerned, spared a superfluous shock, for the Foreign Office came out with a flat denial in time to prevent the morning papers from using a message to which one or two of their evening contemporaries had given prominence the night before. Reuter's thereupon explained that though their information was authoritative it was not official, adding rather naively that its source was not French. There is sufficient guidance there to enable higher critics with reasonable knowledge of the subject to speculate with some confidence as to the authorship of the canard. That, however, is immaterial. It is enough that the facts should be known, and, as so often, the circulation of baseless rumours enables needed prominence to be given to the truth. That Germany has several millions of trained soldiers within her borders is no mystery to anyone. Everyone knows how many men served in her armies in the war, and as those demobilized in 1919 have neither been exterminated nor exiled, it follows that the bulk of them are in Germany still. It may be equally true that there are more arms in Germany than the Treaty permits. The French themselves possibly know how some of them got in. But even if every able-bodied German were armed with revolver or rifle, the country's aggressive possibilities, in the absence of field artillery, are negligible. And artillery Germany neither possesses nor can possess on any alarming scale. You cannot hide eighteen-pounders under beds.

THE attempts of the Protectionists to represent British shipping as a decaying industry show either an extraordinary disingenuousness or an extraordinary ignorance. It is quite true that shipping has been going through a bad period. It is also true that other nations have increased their tonnage more rapidly than ourselves. This is, in the main, a misfortune for *them*. The truth is that, whereas the volume of international trade to be carried is much smaller than in 1913, there has been an increase of 15 million tons in the total available shipping. A very large amount of shipping is, therefore, laid up. Of this about 5 million tons is under the American flag; and the United States Shipping Board has admitted in a report to Congress that even its reduced services cannot be run in competition with British and other rivals, except at a heavy loss which must be made good by the American taxpayer. Portugal is another example of rapid increase frequently cited by the Protectionists. That increase is due to the seizure of German steamers, and the Portuguese Government has admitted a loss of over £4,000,000 on the working of these ships, which it is now trying to dispose of to private buyers. Lord Birkenhead's assertion that the ships of Protectionist countries are more fully or profitably employed than our own is simply not true. British shipping has retained its superior efficiency, and, in proportion to the size of the fleet, very little is now laid up; but British owners are wisely refraining from launching out into big building programmes until the demand for tonnage shows some sign of overtaking the supply. One thing is certain: neither the shipowner nor the shipbuilder can be helped by placing new barriers in the way of international commerce.

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In striking contrast to the nonsense talked on this subject by Mr. Baldwin and Lord Birkenhead is the letter from Lord Inchcape that appeared in the "Times" of December 1st. On questions of seaborne trade, Lord Inchcape speaks with exceptional authority, and his analysis of the principles that should underlie our economic policy has more than electioneering value. "We, of all people, should know, as a matter of daily experience, that our prosperity depends on the prosperity of others; that no nation can grow rich on another's poverty . . . an unhampered liberty of commercial exchange is as essential to British prosperity as to the world's tranquillity and restoration." Lord Inchcape rightly calls attention to the fact that the war was won "through the wealth we had accumulated as the result of Free Trade, by the aid which our magnificent mercantile marine afforded to our Navy, and by our ability to draw upon the diversified sources of supply which Free Trade has opened up." Despite a rather petulant and confused reply from the pen of Sir Aubrey Brocklebank, who appears to think that the commercial greatness of Holland, Venice, and the Hansa perished as a result of Free Trade policy, we believe that most of the leading representatives of our greatest key-industry are behind Lord Inchcape in regarding "protection and bureaucracy" as "the strangest wet-nurses for British commerce."

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SPEAKING at Liverpool on Monday, Mr. Baldwin said that the circumstances of our important *entrepôt* trade would receive the most careful consideration of the Government. "One would imagine," he said, "from many of the statements of our opponents, that in adopting a new policy we are all going to lose our wits." What-

ever the fate of the Cabinet's collective wits, there is a real danger that a general tariff would seriously injure our *entrepôt* trade. It would be easy to give rebates of duty to goods shipped into this country and out again, or to organize some system of bonding; but it would be almost impossible to prevent delays and administrative inconvenience. This country acts as a dépôt and collecting station for much of the trade between North-Western Europe and the outside world. The great shipping lines which join the British ports with those of America, Africa, and Australia find that they can save both time and money by loading and unloading in this country, and allowing that part of their cargo which is intended for Europe to be reshipped. Trade of this kind depends to a very large extent on the absolute freedom of our ports not only from Customs duties on merchandise, but also from the shackles of administrative red tape.

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MR. RONALD MCNEILL's contributions to the tariff controversy during the General Election have been as remarkable, if not so mischievous, as his utterances on foreign affairs. On Tuesday night he said that "If the Government's present policy were successful, then from the revenue they would get they intended to reduce, and he hoped in a short time to knock off altogether, existing duties on such things as tea, tobacco, sugar, and possibly beer." Translating this into blunt figures, Mr. McNeill hopes to raise about £230,000,000 from only just over £200,000,000 of manufactured imports, a large proportion of which Mr. Amery intends to exclude altogether. If it came from anyone else, we should describe this utterance as a blatant attempt to deceive the electorate, but in Mr. McNeill's case no such assumption is required.

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IN a few areas, and especially in South London and Glasgow, the election was marked by a great deal of rowdyism and organized interference with Conservative and Liberal meetings. Fortunately, this noise and violence was thrown into sharp relief by the very general orderliness and quiet attentiveness of meetings elsewhere. There can be no doubt that the general tendency is in the right direction, and that argument counts for far more in an election and mere clamour for a great deal less than in former years. The bad patches have been areas where Labour feeling is extreme, and where Communism is present in considerable force, vocally if not numerically. No one can sincerely saddle the leaders of the Labour Party with responsibility for the behaviour of the Communist *claque*, but their disavowals of it would be more impressive if their relationship with Communism were less ambiguous. They declare their opposition to Communism, but at the election they officially endorsed the candidatures of a number of declared Communists, some of whom were only put up at the last moment to damage Liberal chances.

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THE majority of the new members of Parliament will probably take a holiday until the New Year: not so the representatives of the coalminers, who have to turn immediately from political activities to their business as trade union leaders. The coming delegate meeting of the Miners' Federation, to be held in London on the 14th, will consider most momentous questions. It will be remembered that the owners and the miners at their last meeting agreed to appoint a sub-committee to consider the miners' demands for amendments in the existing National Agreement. Immediately after that meeting Mr. Hodges announced that a delegate meeting was

being called to which the executive would report the result of their negotiations with the owners. The sub-committee has not yet apparently held any meeting, and it may be that its appointment was merely a convenient method of shelving the whole matter until after the General Election. If this is so, the delegate meeting may decide to terminate the agreement forthwith; but, on the other hand, the executive may only wish to keep the delegates informed as to the progress of negotiations, pending the report of the sub-committee. Whether or not decisive action is taken, the coming meeting will be of supreme interest as revealing the present attitude of the miners in different coalfields.

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THE "Round Table," whose articles on economic questions are usually written by a well-known financial authority, contains in its December issue a particularly interesting and carefully weighed contribution, entitled "Inflation and Deflation." Its conclusions may be summarized as follows:—(1) "It would be a fundamental mistake to abandon the attempt to return ultimately to the old gold par," and "we should leave the world under no misapprehension as to our intentions"; (2) we must wait for the attainment of this end until prices rise in the United States, as they are likely to do sooner or later, and must not attempt to hasten it by further deflation; (3) our authorities should, therefore, affirm "that they aim at the stability of internal prices, and that they do not propose to take any step which will tend to discourage the improvement of trade now showing itself"; (4) the danger of misunderstanding is so great that any more definite statement or action than the above should be avoided. The "Round Table" refers at length to the articles on the subject which have appeared in these pages. Answering the specific questions, which we put to critics of the Federation of British Industries, it agrees that trade recovery must entail an expansion of currency and credit, and some rise in wholesale prices, and "should not be prevented merely because it involves some tendency for the exchange to fall." It appends the caution, which we cordially endorse, that "on the other hand, continually rising prices are not what we want. We want stability. . . . We can never dispense with active and prudent control on the part of Bank of England."

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WE agree with the "Round Table" that the delay in our trade recovery has been due far more to "the dangerous condition of Europe" than to deflation. We have never argued more than that the latter was an appreciable, and a remediable, factor. We take it that the "Round Table" would not dispute this; it admits at least "great force" in our contention that until recently our exchange with New York was maintained at an unduly high level, and that this served to prejudice our export trades. The perspective of the problem has, however, been altered during the last few weeks. The exchange has fallen heavily, and has remained for about a month well below the figure of \$4.40; but the Bank of England has not raised Bank Rate, as their action last July made it reasonable to fear they would. If this restraint continues, and does not prove to be merely a cautious desire to avoid provoking an outcry during a General Election, we shall agree that deflation has ceased to be an operative factor. On the same assumption, we shall look for a gradual but steady improvement in trade, unless the political condition of Europe becomes more dangerous than ever, which unfortunately seems only too probable.

## THE FEAR OF PEACE.

"Suppose to-morrow you settled Reparations and had real peace in Europe, would that give you prosperity? The moment peace is restored in Europe and the exchanges are stabilized, you will find yourself face to face with real rivalry and competition."—MR. LLOYD GEORGE in the *House of Commons* on July 16th.

"Settle peace in Central Europe and trade would look after itself."—MR. LLOYD GEORGE at the Queen's Hall on November 21st.

"In large measure this state of affairs (unemployment) is due to the political and economic disorganization of Europe consequent on the Great War. . . . We shall continue to make every effort . . . to the restoration of a true peace in Europe. But that at the best must take time. A year ago Mr. Bonar Law could still hope that a more settled condition of affairs was in prospect, and that with it trade might enjoy a substantial and steady revival. . . . Since the occupation of the Ruhr it has become evident that we are confronted by a situation which, even if it does not become worse, is not likely to be normal for years to come."—MR. BALDWIN in his *Election Address*, issued on November 17th.

"When Germany does begin to produce again in mass quantities for export, she will be producing under conditions that will make it very difficult to compete with her. Owing to what has happened in the currency depreciation in that country, her works will find themselves to an enormous extent freed from debts and mortgages and debentures . . . and you have to remember that at the same time she will be making greater efforts to export than she has ever done, because . . . she will have to import more in the way of food and raw materials than ever before. Those requirements alone will need greater exports; and, if the time comes, as it may come, that she finds herself paying Reparations, those again can only be paid by export, so that we shall have to face in the future an export from Germany over and above anything we have ever known from her before."—MR. BALDWIN at Worcester on November 24th.

THE inconsistencies of eminent politicians are always good controversial material, and their interest, as a rule, extends no further. But the above passages have a far more serious significance. They reflect very faithfully a fluctuation of mood and a confusion of mind, which are neither peculiar to politicians nor the product of insincerity, but are highly representative, we believe, of honest and intelligent opinion. To hope that peace in Central Europe would spell a trade revival; to fear that it would mean a really formidable threat to our industrial position; to attribute the danger to the competitive advantage of a German industry freed from the burdens of taxation and debenture charges, and again to the artificial stimulus to German export which Reparation payments would entail—to have held all these views at different times within the last few months, even, like Mr. Baldwin, to have held them all at the same moment, is a charge to which a great many people, who may fairly claim to be called "enlightened," would have to plead guilty. There is no economic question on which clear thinking and settled convictions are more urgently required. It is not fanciful, we believe, to suggest that our incoherence on the subject is one of the underlying causes of the failure of British policy to secure a European settlement during the past four years. We rightly accuse France of inconsistency in demanding large Reparations, and yet seeking to obstruct the economic recovery of Germany. But, in advocating this recovery, have we ourselves been quite wholehearted? In a general way, we have undoubtedly desired it; for we have seen that our trade has suffered from the chaos in Central Europe. But, as soon as we have come to envisage definite terms of settlement, to contemplate, for example, the complete cancellation of Allied debts, and the surrender of our own Reparation claims, we have drawn back, not only because this strikes us as unfair, but because we shrink from the competitive advantage which it would seem to

give to French and German industry. We too, confusedly and almost subconsciously, *have feared, and still fear*, the consequences of a European settlement, on the only terms on which it can ever be secured. And these subconscious fears can exert on public affairs the same subtle and far-reaching influence which, as modern psychology has shown, they exert in private life.

Is there any substance in these fears? It is obvious enough that two of the grounds for alarm mentioned by Mr. Baldwin are contradictory. If Germany has to pay enormous Reparations, German industry will have to bear a heavy burden of taxation. If she is relieved of the obligations of external debt, the artificial stimulus to her exports will be gone. But these possibilities can still cause uneasiness as the *alternative* dangers of a settlement. Let us, therefore, consider them separately on their merits.

The fear of a flood of German exports, as a factor making for temporary dislocation and disturbance, would have some substance in it if Reparation payments were likely to be effected suddenly and on a gigantic scale. But such a contingency is too fantastic to justify a moment's uneasiness to-day. If Germany pays further Reparations at all, she can only pay them very gradually indeed, starting with a trifling figure, and increasing slowly year by year. The increase of German exports would be correspondingly gradual, and would have no disturbing effects on the course of trade. Indeed, this is really to reverse cause and effect. Disorganized Germany is not in a position to expand her exports rapidly, and such expansion as she may manage to achieve will be required in the first instance, as Mr. Baldwin recognizes, to replenish her exhausted stocks of materials and food. That is why she cannot pay substantial Reparations for a long time to come. But a gradual recovery of German exports on the one hand, and of German imports on the other, means the reinvigoration of those arteries of world trade of which Germany before the war was a vital centre, and which have been paralyzed by her collapse. Let anyone who would feel uneasy at the prospect of increased German exports study the foreign trade returns. Our imports from Germany, Germany's exports to the world as a whole, are a mere fraction of their pre-war values. The expansion of German exports has thus a very long way to go before it does more than re-establish the pre-war equilibrium, from the displacement of which we are suffering to-day.

The fear of the competitive advantage which German industry will derive from currency depreciation is more widely entertained to-day than the fear of Reparation payments. It was emphasized even by General Smuts in his admirable utterance on October 23rd. To point out that the most alarmist members of this school would not advise currency depreciation here is not enough to reassure them; for it is conceivable that methods involving so much immediate hardship and injustice as to forbid their adoption, might none the less leave a permanent advantage behind. But it is remarkable that people should assume so readily the transience of the evil consequences of currency demoralization. Granting that the habit of saving is sufficiently deep-rooted to revive speedily when a stable currency is restored; the loss of business connections and capital resources, the effect on the vitality of the population of long years of semi-starvation, the virtual destruction of the old German middle-class, which, with its traditions of frugality, hard work, and intellectual activity, contributed so much to the development of German industry, are only too likely to prove enduring handicaps, for which no release from mortgage charges will adequately compensate. A passage from Macaulay's classic speech in

1846 in favour of the Ten Hours Bill sums up the essence of the situation:—

" You try to frighten us by telling us that, in some German factories, the young work seventeen hours in the twenty-four; that they work so hard that among thousands there is not one who grows to such a stature that he can be admitted into the army; and you ask whether, if we pass this Bill, we can possibly hold our own against such competition as this. Sir, I laugh at the thought of such competition. If ever we are forced to yield the foremost place among commercial nations, we shall yield it, not to a race of degenerate dwarfs, but to some people pre-eminently vigorous in body and in mind."

So, to-day, if we fear competition, the competition that is likely to prove formidable is that of countries whose industrial resources and efficiency have not been impaired by the destructive malice of their foes and the fever of a currency debauch.

But what exactly have we to fear from the competition of any country? Granted that some other peoples (though they certainly will not include the wretched Germans) will emerge from the final liquidation of the war less heavily burdened than ourselves, how will that injure us? It may prejudice our pride of place: it will not prejudice our absolute prosperity. Any "competitive advantage" which another country may obtain from lighter fiscal burdens than our own will be speedily taken out in the form of a higher standard of life for its workers, an increase in the remuneration which the various partners in its industry will be able to command. That will be well for them; it will not be ill for us. We stand to gain by reducing our own burden of taxation; we do not stand to gain by increasing that of other peoples. This fear of another country gaining, for whatever reason, an enduring "competitive advantage," is, in truth, one of the hollowest, as it is one of the commonest, of illusions. On the one hand, we are told to tremble before the technical efficiency and temperance of America; on the other, before the low standard of wages in the East. Neither justifies the smallest alarm. The former produces, as its natural consequence, a high standard of wages; the latter is the inevitable effect of a low standard of technical efficiency. The one great fact that remains, after these adjustments have worn away all apparent competitive advantage, is that, in Mr. McKenna's words at Belfast, "we prosper as the world prospers; we decline as the world declines." Can we not lay this truth to heart, vindicated as it is by the detailed trade statistics of the last few years? If we were really convinced of it, instead of only half-believing it, our efforts for peace in Europe would be more single-minded, and might prove more effective.

#### IMPRESSIONS OF THE FIGHT.

THE thunder of oratory has passed, and all that remains is to hear the verdict, and as that will be known before these lines appear, it is useless to attempt forecasts. But it may be worth while setting down a few general impressions of the fight gained by visits to many constituencies in different parts of the country, but mainly in the Midlands and the South. It has been a singularly puzzling and confused fight, in which one's anticipations changed daily and almost hourly under the impact now of this motive, now of that. My own experience leads me to the conclusion that the fiscal issue held the centre of the stage throughout, and that other questions played little or no effective part in the election.

Contrasting the struggle with that of twenty years ago, it seemed like a sudden raid compared with a formal

pitched battle. There had been over two years of preparatory fire before the election of 1906, and the whole area of the vast argument had been explored when the forces met in the grapple of the polling booths. Moreover, the conditions were normal. There had been no terrific breach with the past, and the battle seemed only a more formidable incident in a controversy with which we had been familiar all our lives. The old dog was always being disguised in a new coat—"Reciprocity," "Fair Trade," "Retaliation," "Imperial Preference," "Tariff Reform"—but we knew him by his bark, and we had a stout whip that would drive him to his kennel, over which his real name "Protection" was inscribed. But this time it was a night attack without warning, under cover of an unprecedented storm, and on a public who had forgotten the argument, or, more often, had never heard it. Nearly ten years had passed since the war broke out, and the new generation that had come into political activity was wholly untrained in the problem, and naturally indisposed to regard with excessive reverence any doctrine that came from a past that had ended in such complete disaster.

In these circumstances, the advantage was overwhelmingly with the attack. The Free Trade case is a reasoned case, and there was little time to reason. The Protectionist case is an appeal to primal instincts, and finds a ready acceptance from the natural man. As Randolph Churchill said of his "Fair Trade" campaign, "It goes down like milk, but how we shall carry it out, God alone knows." In ordinary times, such a grotesque gamble would have been inconceivable. Mr. Baldwin's scheme was such a thing of shreds and patches, such a jumble of evasions and dodges, bribes and compromises, that it would have been laughed out of existence. It was without a single effective spokesman, it was only half endorsed or unwillingly endorsed by all the most instructed minds in the Tory party itself, and it had so bad a Press that, according to all the laws of political calculation, it should have been kicked contemptuously into the gutter.

But it was shock tactics on an unparalleled scale. It was like the descent of a quack upon a gaping crowd at a country fair. It had all the novelty of a sudden revelation, and created such an atmosphere of simple credulity that the extraction of sunshine from cucumbers seemed the most natural process in the world. Strange that no one had suggested it before! Strange that we had been left floundering all this time in the post-war mud when this golden road to Samarkand lay shining before us and beckoning us on to prosperity! What lay in the way? Only an argument, and arguments are so tiresome and they take time, while the quack's pill could be swallowed without a moment's thought, and if it did not cure our toothache it would certainly cure something else.

In 1906 the Free Trade case could still draw upon personal memories of the hungry 'forties; but this source of strength has vanished in the interval. How much that personal note meant was revealed to me at a meeting which I addressed at Eastbourne at which a fine, white-bearded old man, a mariner who had gone to sea as a boy in the middle of the last century, got up in the midst of the audience and told how he had seen the mercantile marine of the United States disappear under the influence of Protection, and the mercantile marine of this country develop into unchallenged supremacy under the influence of Free Trade. The effect of this bit of living experience was extraordinary.

The interest of the women in the election was intense, but troubled, as in the case of the woman who,

being canvassed, said, "Some people say one thing and some say the other. What am I to think?" "What does your husband think?" she was asked. "He don't think," was the reply; "he's a Tory." The clash under which the poor woman reeled was that of two main ideas between which she found it difficult to choose. On the one hand she saw that taxes meant a rise in prices; on the other she was impressed by the simple idea that if you kept the foreigner's goods out there would be more work at home. Both propositions seemed equally self-evident, and the latter was certainly the most formidable weapon in the armoury of the Protectionists. It seemed so indisputable, so beautifully clear that it left nothing to be said, and the economic argument of world trade became confusing and spectral in its lucid presence. Which consideration outweighed the other on balance in the minds of the women was a point on which my impressions underwent repeated change. Here fear was in the ascendant; there it was hope. But my general conclusion was that the argument had boiled itself down to these two root ideas, and that the result depended mainly on which of them prevailed over the other in the housekeeping mind.

I do not think that the fallacy of "making the foreigner pay" exercised much influence either with men or women. It admitted of such simple and complete disproof that its production seemed to me a mistake on the part of the Protectionists. If I were arguing on their side I should make a virtue of necessity, admit that the consumer paid the tax, and rely on the much less easily answered claim that if you keep the foreigner out you make more work at home. That argument has to be met, and it can only be met by educating the public and awakening in them an intelligent interest in the operations of world trade.

Whatever the result of the election, we are only at the beginning of this great argument of commerce, and it will not be decided either by parrot cries on the one side, or by witty epigrams and the rattle of tin cans on the other. My experience of many meetings of all sorts is that there is no need to "talk down" to the audience, but that plain economic truths, such as the astonishing story of the Lancashire cotton trade for example, or the simple exposition of the exchange of commodities, will hold attention as securely as a romantic tale of the sea. The true way of meeting the "pearl button" method of appeal is to tell what the great staple industries have done, what they mean to the national life, and upon what conditions their prosperity rests. These things can be done quite simply. Much the best speech I have heard in this campaign, apart from the old mariner's, was a little speech of a manufacturer of chairs in Buckinghamshire, who, while admitting that a tax on Austrian bentwood chairs would benefit him individually, showed how it would punish the public and ultimately himself as a consumer.

The lesson of the election is that Free Trade rests on an instructed public opinion, and that if it is to be preserved there must be unceasing spade-work in the constituencies. This time we were taken by surprise. We shall deserve to lose the battle that has now begun if we are taken by surprise again. We need carefully considered propaganda on this great question, not on the eve of an election, but during the interval when passions are cool and there is a more receptive frame of mind abroad.

Apart from the main issue, the most noticeable fact was the feeling which was exhibited in regard to French policy. That the source of unemployment was to be sought for in the condition of Europe, and not in our fiscal arrangements, was generally recognized, and "Hats off to France" has become a phrase of universal

derision. In this connection the collapse of the "stunt" Press in the campaign deserves notice. Lord Rothermere and Lord Beaverbrook have left the poor sheep, who were accustomed to look up to them to be fed, in a condition of dazed and bewildered helplessness between the "Yes" of one day and the "No" of the next.

I saw little, personally, of the activities of the Labour Party, but my general impression is that the introduction of the Capital Levy was electorally a blunder for which they paid heavily. It seemed beside the mark, for no one believed that it had any relevance to the problem of unemployment, and it gave the Labour campaign an air of unreality which was a serious handicap. The public were profoundly interested in the fiscal issue, and the preoccupation of Labour with the Capital Levy seemed to suggest that that Party was indifferent to the subject about which the public were thinking.

A. G. G.

## REUTER'S MONOPOLY IN FOREIGN NEWS.

By HERBERT BAILEY.

[Great prominence was given last week by some daily newspapers to a statement issued by Reuter's Agency on Germany's breaches of the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty. This the "Times" has denounced as "A Spurious Sensation," and the fact that it has been put forward as emanating from "well-informed quarters," makes the following account of Reuter's connections specially interesting.—ED., THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM.]

In the circulation of foreign news there has long existed a monopoly in England, a monopoly so complex that no man reading an item of foreign news in any of his newspapers can tell who originated it, from whence it really came, or who is responsible for its truth. It is a fact that he will find, if he cares to look, the word "Reuter" after most of the items of foreign news, but of Reuter he knows nothing beyond its name and its repetition in newspapers. He does not know whether it is an agency purely for gathering news, or whether it has a banking or advertising business associated with it, what are its relations with foreign Governments and foreign news agencies, and who are the men who obtain their pay from the organization of that name. Yet Reuter's news agency enjoys a monopoly of foreign news in this country that men like Northcliffe have attempted to break, but which persists in spite of its adversaries. It will be argued that there are other news agencies supplying foreign news besides Reuter, but no man who has handled foreign news in Fleet Street or served abroad as a special correspondent of a London newspaper, regards these others as serious competitors. There are also many correspondents attached to individual newspapers who reside in foreign capitals, but, owing to the facilities enjoyed by Reuter's, they only supplement the news of that service. In the provincial Press of Britain Reuter's enjoys a monopoly that is almost exclusive, for few of the country newspapers can afford the luxury of maintaining correspondents abroad.

No one will accuse Reuter's of distributing false or perverted news. On the contrary, Reuter's has a reputation for reliability that has been well earned. But in recent years Reuter's has become nothing but a presenter of official news, sending out to the world the views of foreign Governments and refusing to handle anything that would endanger its relations with those Governments. When the Foreign Office during the war instructed the ambassadors of this country to give preferential treat-

ment to the correspondents of Reuter's agency it set the seal of official authority on Reuter's, which it has ever since retained. Among foreign newspapers, indeed, Reuter's is regarded only as the mouthpiece of the Foreign Office, and many of them have complained of the connection between the agency and the Government. But Reuter's not only voices the opinions that the British Government wishes the world to accept; it performs this service, mostly in an indirect manner, for foreign Governments. No one can point to any revelation of the designs and works of foreign Governments by Reuter's that would have aroused the ire of such Governments. If there is a censorship, Reuter's obeys. If a foreign Government wishes to suppress news of its activities, do we ever see Reuter's challenging its wishes? In every part of the world the name of Reuter is held in reverence by the Foreign Offices of all Governments as the most agreeable receptacle for what they have to say. Let a special correspondent detect a foreign Government in one of its deceptions, as I have done, and see who sends the official denial around the earth more quickly even than one can present the truth. It is Reuter's news agency.

Far more perilous, however, than the direct association of Reuter's with foreign Governments is its relationship with foreign news agencies. That they may enjoy better facilities for getting news quickly, all the news agencies of the world have working arrangements with each other until the head office of any of these agencies seems like a home for polyglots, the representatives of Japanese and American news agencies passing each other in the corridors to greet the correspondents of Swedish and Spanish organizations outside. Reuter's, for instance, has an arrangement with the Havas news agency of Paris. Yet the Havas news agency never dares to send out a line that the French Foreign Office does not approve, and it floods the world with French propaganda disguised as genuine news. In every country, Reuter's has a similar working arrangement with the principal news agencies, and the principal news agencies of the world are the official mouthpieces of their Governments. The result is that here in England we are constantly flooded with the views of foreign Governments disguised as pure news, and no one knows whether the original item was written by a Japanese doing the bidding of his Government or a Frenchman blessed with a decoration from M. Poincaré. Of course, Reuter's has its own correspondents in foreign cities, but their offices are so inadequately staffed that men of the nationality of the country wherein they dwell have frequently to be drawn into the service, and at night the propaganda flood goes on unchecked. A man in Reuter's service could hardly with impunity challenge the wishes of foreign Powers. He loses his identity as a correspondent in becoming a second-hand propagandist.

At a moment when the propaganda activities of Governments are increasing every day, when the suppression of the truth is a practice veiled by what is called "diplomatic discretion," the danger of the British people being fed in foreign news through an agency that cannot be truthfully called independent, will be evident to every editor and every politician. The Associated Press of America, which is analogous to the Press Association of England, with the exception that the Associated Press maintains the greatest foreign news service the world has known, has had to face a similar problem. It is a close corporation maintained by the American newspapers themselves, unlike Reuter's agency, which is a commercial enterprise. But faced with the severe competition of rival news agencies like the United Press

and the International News Service of Mr. Randolph Hearst, opposed at every turn by the large staffs of correspondents that every newspaper of any prominence in America maintains abroad, and checked by the exaltation of news above opinions that marks the American Press, the Associated Press, although having working arrangements with Reuter's and other news agencies, has been encouraged to place the truth above the wishes of foreign Governments. Yet, even in America, there is an increasing outcry against the relationship of the Associated Press with foreign news agencies, and editors have bestirred themselves to ensure that the suppression of the truth and the printing of skilfully disguised propaganda has no assistance from them. When will our editors be able to say that they, too, have fought the perilous monopoly in foreign news?

## LIFE AND POLITICS

THE old lights of Liberalism are being extinguished fast. Lord Loreburn's death follows close upon that of Lord Morley, whose school of thought in politics he largely represented. He was a fearless and uncompromising Radical, the most pugnacious of pacifists, a stout friend and an implacable foe. As "Bob" Reid, few men were more popular on the platform twenty or thirty years ago than he was, and no one was more trusted. In the great rupture over the Boer War he was one of the most resolute supporters of "C.B." and his hostility to the Liberal Imperialists coloured the whole of his after life. He did not forgive easily, and if he distrusted or disagreed with men he cultivated no amiable concealments of the fact. His bearing was high and challenging. He did not suffer fools gladly or criticism meekly, and, as was said of another great Scotsman, he was, politically, "gey ill to live wi'." In the days of the great disruption, "C.B." was once discussing, with that candour which was one of his most agreeable traits, the qualities of his colleagues. "Bob" Reid was mentioned. "Bob Reid," he said, screwing up one eye quizzically, "Bob Reid is a first-rate Radical, and a good fellow—if he has his own way. If he doesn't have his own way he sulks for a week." But "C.B." had a high regard for his sterling character, his loyalty to principle, and his solid parts, and his selection of him as Lord Chancellor was the announcement to the world that in the reconciliation with the Liberal Imperialists the opponents of the war were the senior partners.

LORD LOREBURN'S exercise of the patronage of his office offered a striking contrast to that of his predecessor, Lord Halsbury. He did much to restore the standard of the judiciary. Indeed, his impartiality tended to be a little unfair to his political friends, and in regard to the magistracy he incurred the indignation of many Liberals who had expected to see a much more drastic use of his power to correct the notorious predominance of Tories on the country benches. His distrust of the Liberal Imperialists remained, and was, indeed, strengthened by the course of foreign policy under Sir Edward Grey, and his resignation of the Lord Chancellorship in 1912 assumed the character of a formal breach with his old colleagues. He has left on record, in "How the War Came," his view of our part in the tragedy, and he never ceased to protest against the circumstances in which the

military conversations with France were entered into in January, 1906. Perhaps he was a little too inelastic in his mental processes; but in a time when statesmanship has become so light a thing and men change their parties and their principles with the facility of partners at a dance, it is pleasant to dwell on a career so firm, unfaltering, and public-spirited as that of Lord Loreburn.

By taking up Protection and by indulging in a snap-election, Mr. Baldwin has shown himself to be neither so wise nor so single-minded as some of us hoped he would prove to be when he became Prime Minister. Nevertheless, he remains the best man in his party. He has conducted the campaign with considerable ability. His speeches have been always interesting and well-phrased, and have conveyed a more distinct impression of personality than those of any other politician, except possibly Mr. George. The impression that emerges is that of a reasonable, frank, attractive man, somewhat too complacent about his understanding of the common people, but with decent feelings and devoid of pettiness or rancour. By no means negligible, either, though not a commanding figure. One feels, indeed, that, if he has insufficient experience or judgment to hold his own at all points against the petty shrewdness of party-wire-pullers, there are nevertheless strict limits to the concessions he will make to merely tactical considerations.

SOME curious passages in his election speeches may be adduced in support of this view of Mr. Baldwin's character. In his speech at Bradford on November 29th, for instance, he spoke of the need for a spirit of partnership between Capital and Labour and the value of publicity as a means to this end. Then he said:—

"The day has gone by when the rights of property should be placed above human rights. The day has gone by when the men should talk of the masters as monsters incarnate. These aggregations, masters, on the one hand, and battalions of men, on the other, with the prospect of nothing but unfortunate and indiscriminate struggle, ought to belong to a past age, and they will lead us nowhere. I know of nothing that can help us to pull together more than publicity, increasing knowledge of each other, what we are, what we do, and what our

aims are. You may say that this kind of talk is peculiar electioneering, but after all I am still Prime Minister of this country . . ."

The last note is an interesting one. Why was this "peculiar electioneering"? The answer is clear. Because "this kind of talk" is distinctively Liberal. The speaker was, for the moment, not a Protectionist politician, but an enlightened employer, almost a good Liberal who has joined the wrong Party.

ANOTHER curious passage is to be found in Mr. Baldwin's speech at Bristol on November 26th. Speaking pleasantly of the need for education, he remarked that:—

"As has been well said, the people have been educated to follow a syllogism, but not to detect a fallacy. Until all the people of this country have been educated to detect fallacies—I will leave the rest of the sentence unfinished."

How should the sentence be finished? Perhaps, "—there will still be Protectionists among us" would be most appropriate!

THE special feature of an exhibition of English Gothic oak carving in New York is the reconstruction of a panelled room removed from Boughton Malherbe, Kent, the historical seat of the Wottons. It is very difficult to understand the attitude of mind that can take pleasure in such a transaction. A picture, a statue, a first folio, may pass from England to America without losing in intrinsic interest or value. We may regret its loss; we may be a little jealous of the long American purse; but the sum of beauty in the world is not diminished. It is quite a different thing to detach from its surroundings carved work that was an integral part of an old, historic house. The beauty of such work is not self-contained, but in great part a matter of its relation to its environment. Removed from that environment and re-erected in another land, it loses not only its natural setting but all the atmosphere of historic associations that clings to it. The body of the work may be removed; the soul is killed. The greater blame is ours who allowed the partial demolition of Boughton Malherbe Manor House.

OMICRON.

## BALLET IN CRITICISM

JACQUES CALLOT.

By ALDOUS HUXLEY.

THERE is no orchestra; but two-and-thirty players perform in unison upon as many harpsichords the most brilliant compositions of Domenico Scarlatti. The dry glitter of the instruments fills and exhilarates the air. It is a music that might cure phthisis.

The scene represents a flat, and almost limitless plain, quite bare except for a few small Italian houses, miles away on the horizon, and a vast oak-tree which rises a little to the right of the centre and within a few feet of the back of the stage. There are no leaves on the tree. It is winter, and the grey, intense light of a northern day illuminates the scene.

In the foreground and to the left, a company of vagabond actors are grouped around their hooded waggon. Here are Guarsetto and Mestolino in their linen coats and baggy trousers, their shovel hats stuck with parrots' feathers, their goat's beards and paper

noses. Razullo in tights, tattered jerkin and page's cap, plays on a guitar, whose little belly and interminable long neck make it the very antithesis of Curcurucu, who carries—cautiously, carefully, tremulously on a poor, thin pair of legs—a great paunch, hunched shoulders, and a jutting rump. Fracischina and Signora Lucia are dressed in long, flowing skirts, tight bodice, sleeves like a bishop's, fluttering ringlets.

Opposite, on the right of the stage, a group of ladies and gentlemen, gipsies, beggars, idiots, stand watching them. In the open space between, the actors step out and dance.

They dance, alone, in pairs and trios, in every variety of combination. Now it is Franca Trippa and Fritellino kicking up their heels at one another in a sly, low jig. Now Signora Lucia steps nobly and gracefully through a pavane, while Razullo postures over his

guitar, showing off the elegance of his legs in a series of lunging steps. Curcurucu walks behind him, trying to imitate, as well as his belly and his feeble legs will allow, these heroical attitudes. They are followed by Fracischina and the two satyr-pantaloons. They dance as though intoxicated; not with wine or any of the grosser joys, but with some more rarefied poison. They dance as though they were philosophers who had succeeded at last in picking the lock of the Absolute's back door. They dance as though they had discovered in a sudden flash that life is what it is. The pantaloons dance with their arms akimbo, their hands twisted back downwards, jutted rump answering to jutted belly—a bounding hornpipe. Arms upstretched and beating a tambourine above her head, Fracischina is all aspiring lines and vertical leaping. She is the living, leaping maypole, and the pantaloons, Guarsetto and Mestolino, go leaping round her. They dance, they dance as though they would never stop.

In the midst of their dancing, across the dry and glittering music of the harpsichords is heard, far off, the disquieting sound of drums, beating a march. It grows louder and louder, till at last, at the back of the stage, there files in a company of pikemen. Behind the dancing philosophers the soldiers manoeuvre. Their long pikes come together, fall apart, making arithmetical patterns against the sky. It is a grave Pythagorean dance of pure Number.

When, panting, Fracischina and the pantaloons have made an end, the leaders of this troop, redoubtable Captain Malagamba, redoubtable Buonavita, dressed, like all the other gentlemen, in the romantic uniform of Puss-in-Boots, come striding forward. Theirs is a stamping dance of swashbucklers. The pikes continue to manoeuvre against the colourless sky.

A scene of descriptive pantomime follows the dance. The Captains point up towards the branches of the oak-tree; then, turning to their pikemen, make a signal of command. The ranks divide; we see a pinioned prisoner kneeling at the feet of a friar, who holds aloft a crucifix and with choreographic gestures exhorts to repentance. The ranks close again.

It is a little matter of hanging.

The company applauds: "Bravissimo!" Then in a ring, actors, idiots, gentry, beggars, and gipsies—all hand in hand—dance round the two Captains, who blow kisses and bow their appreciation of the compliment.

The ring breaks up. Six acrobats enter with a long ladder and a rope. They balance the ladder on end, climb up, slide down. All the tricks that one can do with a ladder are done. It is set up at last against the tree, and the rope is fastened to the principal branch so that the noose hangs at a point immediately above the centre of the stage.

The ranks reopen. Slowly the prisoner and the gesticulating friar advance. All crowd forward, turning their backs on the audience, to witness the spectacle. Captain Malagamba takes the opportunity to embrace the Signora Lucia. She, at the imminence of his amorous whiskers, starts away from him. Malagamba follows; there is a brief dance of retreat and pursuit. The Captain has driven her into a corner, between the shafts of the waggon, and is about to ravish an embracement in good earnest, when Razullo, happening to look round, sees what is going on. Brandishing his long-necked guitar, he bounds across the stage, and with one magistral blow lays out the Captain along the floor. Then, pirouetting, he skips off with the delivered Signora. Meanwhile, the prisoner has been led forward to the foot of the ladder, on the rungs of which, like

a troop of long-limbed monkeys, gambol the playful acrobats. The spectators have eyes for nothing else.

One of the village idiots, who lacks the wit to appreciate the charms of the spectacle, sees as he gapes vacantly about him the prostrate carcase of Malagamba, approaches, and bends over it in imbecile sympathy. Malagamba utters a groan; someone in the crowd looks round, calls the attention of the rest. There is a rush. The imbecile is seized, Malagamba raised to his feet, plied with strong waters from a bottle. Buonavita interrogates the idiot, who is held, smiling and driveling, between two arquebusiers.

While, in the foreground, the descriptive pantomime of the idiot's examination, trial, and condemnation is being danced through, behind and above the heads of the spectators, the acrobats are hauling the prisoner up the ladder; they have slipped the noose over his head, they have turned him off. His feet dance a double-shuffle on the wind, then gradually are still.

Captain Buonavita has by this time duly sentenced the idiot to execution. Still smiling, he is led down stage towards the foot of the ladder. The friar proffers him the crucifix.

Everybody dances. Malagamba has by this time sufficiently recovered to seize the vaulting Fracischina by the waist and toss her up into the air. The beggars, the Puss-in-Boots gentlemen, the actors, the idiots even—each seizes a partner, throws her up, brings her floating slowly down, as though reluctant to come to earth again. Fritellino and Franca Trippa jig in and out among the couples, slapping at them with their wooden swords. And the two pantaloons, who know that the world is what it is and are intoxicated with a truth that is 43 per cent. above proof, go leaping and leaping, back and forth, across the front of the stage.

Still smiling, the idiot is coaxed up the rungs of the ladder. Like the debonairest of black spider-monkeys, the acrobats frisk around him, and in the extreme background the moving pikes come together, break apart, asserting unansweredly that two and two make four and that five over blue beans is the number of blue beans that make five.

As the spider-monkeys drop the noose over the idiot's head there is a long commanding roll of drums. All turn round towards the ladder, forming up in an ordered line across the stage; they stand quite still. Only the two pantaloons, intent on their hornpipe, dance on to the glittering phrases of the harpsichords.

The drums roll on. The noose is tightened. For the last time the friar raises his crucifix towards the idiot's lips; the idiot roars with laughter. The drums change their rhythm to the rub-a-dub rataplan of a dancing march. Without changing their positions the spectators begin to mark time, heel and toe. Their feet twinkle, their heads bob up and down. The spider-monkeys make a sudden gesture, and the idiot is turned off to swing by the side of the other victim. His feet as they tread air keep time with the drums and the silent heel and toe of those who beat the solid earth. Rub-a-dub rataplan, rataplan rub-dub.

Suddenly there is silence; drums and harpsichords are still. From far off there comes a sound of singing; it swells, it increases, piercingly beautiful. A procession of monks and choristers passes slowly across the stage. They are singing the *Tenebrae* of Vittoria. *Dum crucifixissent Jesum...* The voices rise and fall, cross and interpenetrate—five solitary agonies that have come together to make a final sixth and more appalling, a sixth and more piercing, more beautiful agony. Slowly the priests and choristers cross the stage; the music

swells and then once more decreases, fading, fainting along the air.

The Puss-in-Boots Captains and the gentlemen, the actors, the beggars, the gypsies, and the idiots stare after the retreating procession in an open-mouthed astonishment. And well they may, for the impresario has made an absurd mistake. This music belongs to an entirely different ballet.

### LOTUS-EATING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

BY FREDERICK NIVEN.

LOTUS-EATING, in the minds of most, is associated only with lands—or islands—between the tropic of Capricorn and the Equator. To say that there is ever an impulse just to sit and stare north of the fiftieth degree of north latitude is to say something not in the tradition, to be suspected of being an innovator!

It is true that there have been times of what is called “feverish activity” in the province of British Columbia, as witness the Cariboo gold rush, or the Wild Horse Creek excitement, or the Vancouver town-lot boom; but in a part of the world where what is called Nature (in the sense of the word meaning mountains, trees, foaming rivers) is so close to us, the other world, the one Wordsworth meant when he wrote: “The world is too much with us,” is easily forgotten. We shut the door on passing fads and phases; we remain civilized and forget sophistication. We cannot help but observe, though we do not gush over them, the colours of running water, the majesty of trees, the flaunt of mountain crests.

As I drove home the other evening, on a long, rutted road between fir woods, with a fruit-ranching neighbour who had just cleared his expenses of picking and packing, made no profit, he suddenly shouted, his trivial banking account forgotten: “Look at that!” The “that” was no less or no more than an array of little clouds like flames drifting clear of the hill crest. And as we jogged on and these flames went out, he had another exclamation over the half of a silver moon on the other side, which was as if floating among the tops of the Douglas firs. It is not the making of fortunes here that is noteworthy, but the pleasure most take in the proximity of natural beauty. I know it may sound a hard saying to some who are desperately dependent on the return of their argosies, but one learns here not to attach too great importance to these returns. We launch them and then forget them.

My own corner of this land is one in which there is little history. Fraser went past three hundred or so miles to north; Thompson, eastward, came nearer, but never drew his canoe up on my beach where the sand-pipers give their pipings. Lewis and Clark knew my river, but hundreds of miles away from where it broadens to a lake and changes from green to purple and back to green again, or to blue, before my door. The history of my immediate vicinity has been chiefly of morning, day, night, the changing seasons, the various weather. As the loons dropped down this spring and laughed here before going north, as they will drop again and call in a week or two, going south, so they have done here for eons. Kingfishers have skimmed these bays, as now they are skimming; fish-hawks for untold centuries have balanced along overhead as now one balances. Ages ago, herons stood on that sandy point as they stand to-day. A few more birds have come of late years with the clearing of forest to make orchard lands; but, in the main, as it is, so has it been time out of mind. It feels like that; and that feeling has its charm, tends to make us take the world’s pothers easily.

The glamour of the place is its ancient serenity. I sit and stare. I stand and stare. I am filled with horror at the thought of the years I lost in streets. I grow so fond of the land that I resent aspersions on it—and then consider aspersions do not matter, and remember something Nietzsche said about spitting against the wind! Perhaps the visit of the Prince of Wales to this good West will make even those Old Country folks who prefer to tell of relatives in India to admitting the existence of relatives in Canada (the name Simla in their ears seeming to have more *éclat* than the name Pincher Creek) revise their verdict. Even the snobs may now say: “My son is in Canada!” with a certain inflection.

We have here many men who have been in all parts of the globe and stay on here indefinitely, lured by the land.

“What’s become of Waring  
Since he gave us all the slip,  
Chose land-travel or sea-faring,  
Rather than tread up and down  
Any longer London Town?”

You may find him here in khaki or drill trousers and flannel shirt, teaming, or working in a sawmill or lumber camp, or in the forestry service, or on a lake steamer, very keen on his fishing and hunting holidays. His speech betrayeth him when you ask him for a direction or a match. Swimming, canoeing, motor-boating, fishing, hunting, mountaineering, just at our door, are to a lot of us valid attractions. Freedom from the routine of showing a season ticket is not a freedom that soon palls. The fleshpots of Egypt do not greatly lure. Roast duck on a spit at a camp fire is as good as roast duck at Gatti’s—or the Berkeley.

The great charm of the life is in living with the changing of the weather and the seasons. It seems valuable to me (though I can’t tell why; and that sense may seem lunacy to some—though I hope not to you!) even to note that the sand of the beach before my house is silver in summer and gold in the fall. The wizard sun does that as the quality of its light changes. There is no sameness. There is infinite variety in one stretch of water, one league of forest.

There are quaint little incidents in the lives of our wild creatures that help toward the cumulative joys of our lives, help to endear the land to us. For example, back from Nakusp there is a hot spring in the forest that, in winter, bubbling on, retains a space of open, unbroken water about two feet broad over a natural basin three feet deep, and there every morning last winter a porcupine came waddling down out of the woods for his bath, rolled about, flapped his tail, rubbed his little hand-like forepaws together, and then went pottering off again. A man I know, camped near while taking out fence-posts, used to watch for that daily comicality. Or, for another example, literally at my own door: a month ago my wife sat on a log reading, and while she was there a little chipmunk came up to her, considered her, then sat down on her knee. Things like that have their delight. They make the day on which they occur a red-letter day, and we have many such red-letter days.

Of course, I know all that talk—and true talk—about the cruelty of nature, the cougar preying on the deer among the exquisite woods, the lynx pouncing upon the grouse among the green lights and shadows. We all have to pounce, if it be on no more than a hen’s eggs and vegetables! But we all have a sporting chance. We all have (for another cliché) a run for our money.

A certain element of natural shyness about speaking of what we greatly love restrains most of us. It certainly restrains me when I am asked why I live here. For some reason, one can write, but one cannot say:

"I live here for the sake of sunlit lake ripples, and what Henley called the 'strange vowels and mysterious gutturals' of water splashing on lonely shores; I live here for the haunting call of the loon and the yellow flight of wild canaries; I live here for the moon in trees (like a dried honesty seed or a brass warming-pan, as you please, and if you seek simile); for the particular blueness of the shadows in crisp snow on bright winter days; for the peppering of gold in tamarack woods in spring; for the scarlet of maples among yellowing birches in October."

I could never communicate all that *viva voce* except to a chosen few, and hardly to them if they were all together! I would say, lighting my pipe: "Oh, I rather like the place." Indeed, even to write it gives me a self-conscious feeling (as of one who dreads lest he has worn his heart on his sleeve), and causes me, abruptly, to shut up.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PROTECTIONIST ARGUMENTS.

SIR,—I am much indebted to you for your kind, though regrettably unconvincing, comment on my letter of last week. I acknowledge that, broadly speaking, imports are paid by exports; but I still think that if we could contrive to keep imports as largely as possible *raw*, and exports as largely as possible *manufactured*, we would encourage industry and alleviate unemployment. No question of extending businesses or factories arises: the problem is exclusively that of standing machinery—the spectre most feared by employers and the one they do most to lay; for a factory is an organic unit, and if any considerable percentage of its plant stands idle, the business ceases to function with commercial efficiency and will speedily cease to function at all. As regards relative outputs, I do have the temerity to assert that the output of the average factory in protected countries is higher than here—machinery is hardly at all idle in France and Belgium, whereas here 50 to 90 per cent. is silent.

On the whole question, sir, may not a harassed industrialist be forgiven if he thinks that "cheerfulness breaks in" too readily upon a Metropolitan editor ensconced, as he must be, in serene ascetic aloofness high above the rough-and-tumble, and hymned unweariedly by renunciate bankers, merchants, middlemen, dynasts, mandarins, and all kinds of cloistered remoteness? When, for instance, it is glibly said that what Paul loses in his exports Peter picks up, is it realized how much acute suffering and dislocation must be undergone in skilled trades during any such process of changing over? The highly skilled artisan simply cannot make the metamorphosis—for a time he takes the dole; then, if young, he transfers his energies to some protected country; if old, he crumples up and goes to the workhouse. And if it is a prime error not to see the wood for the trees, may not the too-abstracted thinker, intent on totals, aggregates, and the massed battalions of high finance, land himself in the opposite error of supposing the wood can live though its components die?

Above all, sir, and out of pity for the weak brother, can you not intermit the abracadabra and rub-a-dub-dub of the financial Junker? May we not ask that his unfailing clarions, "London the financial centre of the world"; "Half the shipping of the world British" (*pace* Lascar crews); "How we financed our Allies in the war"; "How the pound looks the dollar in the face" (more recently, the eye)—may we not ask that these be critically examined with a view to determine just what (if anything) such bursts of self-satisfaction really connote in terms of national well-being and contentment?

But I forget myself—in Scotland we speak of "deaving" a man; I hope, sir, you do not confess to being deaved by me.  
—Yours, &c.,

CORSAR PIRRET.

Applegate, Arbroath.

[We apologize to Mr. Pirret for having misunderstood his point; but we think we had some excuse. Mr. Pirret cannot

be unaware that the present unemployment is concentrated chiefly in the export trades, shipping and shipbuilding, and only to a very small extent in trades suffering from competing imports. Yet Mr. Pirret accuses us of complacency about the process of skilled men changing their trade. It is precisely because we realize the "acute suffering" it means that we are not attracted by the idea of trying to absorb in lace or hardware an accentuated unemployment among cotton-spinners and shipwrights. It is protagonists of Protection like Mr. Amery who seem to imagine that the process of "changing over" presents no difficulties. Is it any wonder that we took Mr. Pirret to refer to long-period results rather than to the immediate situation?

In general, standing machinery is a function, not of the normal volume of business, but of its fluctuations. These fluctuations have no connection, in our opinion, one way or the other, with tariff policy (they were certainly more violent in the United States before the war than they were here). On the other hand, we regard them as dependent in an important degree on monetary policy; and, if Mr. Pirret had read any of our very frequent references to this topic, he would not, we think, accuse us of complacency about unemployment, still less of undue subservience to the "financial Junker."—ED., THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM.]

SIR,—The "Daily News" of November 30th, in criticism of the "Times," inquires, "How is the foreigner to pay us for our exports if we will not exchange them for his?"

This argument was exposed many years ago. Of course, *eventually* payment must be made in goods or services, if it is to be made at all, but it is precisely the question of time which is important.

If immediate payment is not desired by the exporter, deferred tribute can be received in the form of interest, a temporarily insignificant, but eventually overwhelming sum.

This is the worst danger of an adverse trade balance; it enables the economically superior country to "participate" in the industry of the inferior, and unless the latter can put an end to the process by developing natural resources or through adventitious circumstances, as in the U.S.A., it eventually means *control by the creditor*, e.g., England and Portugal in the eighteenth century.

This is highly undesirable, and an argument against so-called "Free" Trade which is generally ignored.—Yours, &c.,

GEOFFREY BIDDULPH.

Metropolitan Art School, Dublin.

December 3rd, 1923.

[It is astonishing that anyone should imagine that Britain's "adverse trade balance" is made good by foreigners investing in our industries. Notoriously, Britain is the great foreign investor, and the great recipient of interest "tribute" from abroad. The Board of Trade estimated that for 1922 we received £200 millions in interest from abroad, and that this, together with other "invisible exports," such as shipping services (£140 millions), left us with a "favourable trade balance" of £155 millions, representing our net foreign investments that year. In these circumstances to curtail imports, without curtailing exports, means to increase the export of capital, which in our judgment is already fully large enough. Does Mr. Biddulph wish us to send still more capital abroad?—ED., THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM.]

### THRESHING DIFFICULTIES.

SIR,—That surely is a lamentable story your correspondent Mr. Reginald Lennard sends you from Oxford as to the threshing difficulties of a neighbour. He waits for weeks on the perambulating mill, till the heads of his wheat-stacks are all watered for want of thatch, and the seed late for his autumn sowing, and the proposal he makes is a farmer combine for threshing to "escape from the toils of the threshing monopolist."

Why should your English farmers not have their own mills and oil-engines? Hundreds of farmers in our North Country have these now, and the number increases yearly. They are on places not over thirty acres in extent. A mill and engine for such a place need not cost more than £90, and

no farmer, once they are installed, would part with them. He can thresh at any time and have his corn and straw always in perfect condition. The engine will bruise his corn for his cattle, and we have quite small farms, under 100 acres in extent, on which the engine is used to light the house and steading with electric light. Why should not your English farmers do likewise?—Yours, &c.,

M.

Huntly, Aberdeenshire.  
December 4th, 1923.

#### THE BOMBARDMENT OF CORFU.

SIR,—Mrs. Trevelyan is mistaken in thinking that I wish "to put the worst possible construction on Italy's action." I should be very glad indeed if the statements made in the leaflet issued by the British-Italian League were accurate. Unfortunately, they are gravely misleading, and can do nothing to remove "the many misapprehensions which have arisen with regard to the circumstances under which the bombardment of Corfu took place." Mrs. Trevelyan makes no attempt in her letter, published in your issue of November 24th, to substantiate the statements in the leaflet, or to traverse the counter-statements in my letter, which appeared in your issue of November 17th.

The doctrine that if a member "does not like the actions of his responsible Committee it is open to him to resign," is new to me. I still hope that the Committee of the British-Italian League will see the wisdom of withdrawing this unfortunate leaflet. If they refuse to do so, it is open to them to resign.—Yours, &c.,

HAROLD WRIGHT.

November 28th, 1923.

#### "BIOLOGY AND RELIGION."

SIR,—It seems to me that Mr. Bertrand Russell's review of Mr. Julian Huxley's "Essays" in your issue of November 10th is hardly a fair criticism of the points at issue.

He may be right in rejecting Mr. Huxley's thesis that "there is some essential tendency to progress in the world" and the religious inferences which follow. But what of his argument? I quote Mr. Russell's main contention as stated in three consecutive sentences:—

"Suppose the universe improved and deteriorated in alternate periods of five minutes, without any change on the average. Surely a person who argued during the five minutes' improvement that progress was so vital a feature of the world as to be a suitable basis for our outlook on life, would be considered short-sighted. From a philosophic point of view, there is no essential difference between five minutes and five billion years."

Mr. Russell attacks a thesis of progress founded upon the history of the world by skipping over to a mere supposition about the universe. Biology deals with the history of life; astronomy deals with the history of matter. There may be an important difference between the two. Again, biology presents us with ample data of a process which, throughout its whole history, has shown a predominantly upward tendency. Here the facts are fairly complete, and seem to justify an inference. But even if (which is not certain) the universe as a whole undergoes alternate periods of improvement and deterioration, still we have no evidence that the net gain is nothing. Mr. Russell is attacking an inference from the known by a reference to the unknown.

We are then given what purports to be an enlargement of the outlook, but on examination I believe it will turn out to be a distortion of the perspective.

An individual is imagined who lives through the whole process of evolution, whether it takes five minutes or five billion years. This person, as a part of the universe, would apparently share in its alternate improvement and deterioration without any change on the average. But the individuals who inhabit this earth, while they are important links in the process of organic (and perhaps psychical and spiritual) evolution, are capable of showing in the course of their lives a definite improvement. When the physical stage on which

they once played their parts finally wears out or blows up, that catastrophe will end the local process of organic evolution; but the improvement gained during the process will not be dissipated, unless the individual conscious beings who were evolved have been annihilated, and the process as a whole was merely a refinement in material adjustments. Mr. Russell has argued as though such were certainly the case. From a philosophic point of view there is at least an essential difference between a fact and an assumption.—Yours, &c.,

WM. FORCE STEAD.

Florence, Italy.

## POETRY

### A LITTLE WILL AND TESTAMENT.

(4 Ballad-Song.)

WHEN I am dead and done with  
And my spirit has taken wing  
Bury me high in the hill country  
Where the moorland waters sing,  
Lay my spent limbs near a trout river,  
A stream that swirls from the fells;  
I would hear the chimes of the rushing brooks  
And the song of the merry moor bells.

If you should bury me in a churchyard  
Near houses ruddy or gray,  
Bone by bone with the town-bred men  
Who have stolen Earth's Wonder away;  
If you should bury me in the churchyard  
Of a tarred and trafficking town,  
I will push through the mould that covers me  
And topple the tombstones down.

But let me lie near a moorland stream  
'Mid the high menacing hills,  
Where the founts of Life spill ceaselessly  
Their glittering silver rills;  
Put a smooth rock above my head,  
And a bunch of ling at my feet,  
Miles and miles from the living dead  
And the tracks that the city men beat.

And take my creel and my fishing-rod  
And a case of feathered flies,  
Lay them deep in the turf that covers me,  
And shed not a tear from your eyes;  
Nail no prisoning coffin about my limbs  
That were made to be blent with the dark,  
For I shall ride on the nape of the wind  
And shine in the rainbow's arc.

Take my big books and my little books,  
And my clothes, smooth wool and tweeds,  
Give them to struggling Tom and Dick,  
Any indigent man with needs;  
Let my kind wife choose whatever she will  
Ere the fade of the next spring moon,  
That she keep for herself and our intimate kin  
Whatever her heart deems boon.

And sing no song with a solemn air  
From black-bound missal of hymns,  
But tune me a lay of a springtide fair,  
Of one that no frost-blight dims.  
O, breathe no song with a sorrowing air  
To lull the freed spirit to sleep!  
But sing of the birds and the cragland herds,  
The lambs and the wilding sheep.

HERBERT E. PALMER.

## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## MR. CONRAD'S ROVER.

THE uniform edition of Mr. Conrad's complete works, now being published by Messrs. Dent at 10s. 6d. each volume, is nearing completion. "Twixt Land and Sea" and "Chance," the thirteenth and fourteenth volumes, have just appeared, leaving only five more to complete the edition as originally contemplated. But already those nineteen volumes are not Mr. Conrad's complete works, for this week has seen the publication of his new novel, "The Rover" (Fisher Unwin, 7s. 6d.).

\* \* \*

WHEN I had read "The Rover" (with very great enjoyment), I turned to "Twixt Land and Sea" and reread the second of the three stories contained in it, "The Secret Sharer." I did so because "The Secret Sharer" is a story which Mr. Conrad wrote many years ago, and it is always a good plan, if you want to get a balanced judgment of a writer's new book, to pick out of his past some jewel which has already stood something of the test of time, and compare it with his latest gift to us. One approaches the task of criticizing these books, with their air of a rather austere superiority, in a mood of diffidence. It seems as if one must inevitably appear pert or impertinent to criticize eternity, the sea, and Mr. Conrad. For the elemental and the eternal, which play so large a part in Mr. Conrad's novels, have become in some way a part of him, and give him that air of regarding ephemeral and smaller things and persons *de haut en bas*. At any rate, time itself appears to stand still for him, as one feels in reading "The Rover" and "The Secret Sharer" consecutively. The intensive critic could point to certain changes which have taken place between the writing of the two stories; but they are minute changes, in the style for instance, which has lost something of its elasticity, and has hardened or thickened, so that the thought and words have a slower tempo, just as the blood runs slower through the hardened and thickened arteries of old age. But in essentials, in his vision, his thoughts, and his feelings, and in the form and power of their presentation to his reader, no writer with twenty volumes behind him has ever changed less than Mr. Conrad.

\* \* \*

Is this changelessness a merit or a defect in Mr. Conrad? Your estimation of his position as a writer will depend largely upon your answer to that question. At any rate, it is because the younger or youngest generation see only this eternal sameness in him that they tend to see nothing in him. And the vehemence with which many between the ages of twenty and thirty now see nothing, or worse than nothing, in Mr. Conrad's books is, I confess, rather shocking to me. Yet there is no real reason why one should be shocked. To be always the same implies narrow limitations, and it is a commonplace to say that Mr. Conrad is a writer with a limited range. The singer of a single song, even though he be a nightingale, always runs the risk of finding an audience to whom that particular "jug, jug" does not appeal, and who will say petulantly that his song is no better than a sparrow's.

\* \* \*

"CHANCE" was the first of Mr. Conrad's books to achieve a popular success, and, in the preface to it which he has now written for the complete edition, he tells us that this gave him a considerable amount of pleasure, because it showed him that he was not "drifting unconsciously into the position of a writer for a limited

coterie," and because it confirmed his belief in the response of mankind to "simple ideas and sincere emotions." In those last words you may find the basis of Mr. Conrad's art—a few simple ideas and a few sincere emotions." In "The Rover" the emotions are, as in "The Secret Sharer," very simple, and the emotions very few and sincere. I imagine that the story grew out of Mr. Conrad's conception of Peyrol the rover's character. There he first had in his mind Peyrol, a typical Conradian character, an old piratical seaman with an exquisite sense of honour and a romantic feeling for the sea which is an undercurrent of nearly all Mr. Conrad's writings. And there you have Mr. Conrad's song. You may not like it—in which case, you will incontinently say that he is a negligible writer. It appeals, however, to me still, and, when I hear its rhythm once more moulding the slow sentences of "The Rover," I feel again that, within very definite limits, we have here a great writer.

\* \* \*

BUT something more must be said with regard to the limitations. Having got his typically Conradian character in Peyrol, Mr. Conrad for the purposes of his story places him in the revolutionary France of the Napoleonic wars. And there he found another typically Conradian character, the woman Arlette who, when little more than a child, had been dazed or half-crazed by being dragged through the horrors of massacre in Toulon. Add to these two a shadowy French lieutenant, a tragic old woman who is Arlette's aunt, and a stagy ex-terrorist, Citizen Scevola, and you have the principal characters of Mr. Conrad's story. The story itself, leading up to the heroic end of Peyrol, is a good one; the simple ideas, the landscape, the sea, the sincere but strange emotions are worked over and over again into Mr. Conrad's elaborate style and resonant prose until the whole dies away in one of those long, rolling, calm, majestic paragraphs which remind one of the end of a Greek play or the low murmur with which a great wave finally dies out on the beach. But, if with this sound in your ears you look back over the story which you have just read, you will be a little astonished to find that you have really been in a world of melodrama. The ideas may be simple, the emotions sincere, but they are the ideas and emotions, not of life, but of melodrama. The plot of "The Rover," as of nearly all Mr. Conrad's stories, is melodramatic; his characters are melodramatic, for they think, feel, talk, and act melodramatically. In fact, Mr. Conrad gets his simple ideas and his sincere emotions by eliminating everything which makes life itself and the people in it so subtle, unexpected, confused, and sordid. I do not think this is a defect in Mr. Conrad, though it is a very definite limitation, and it accounts, I believe, for the fact that his song means less than nothing to many of the younger generation. All novelists and playwrights begin by demanding that their readers shall accept certain conventions which include their characters and the world in which their characters live. Mr. Conrad asks you to accept the convention that the world is a melodramatic world, and personally I cannot see why one should not, for the sake of his story, grant his request, just as one accepts the convention of Shakespeare or the Restoration Dramatists or Dostoevsky that their world is not to be the real world. What matters in art is not these conventions, but the use which the artist makes of them after they are accepted.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## THE PERFECT FRIEND.

**Some New Letters of Edward Fitzgerald.** Edited by F. R. BARTON. Foreword by Viscount GREY OF FALLODON. (Williams & Norgate. 8s. 6d.)

THESE new letters of Fitzgerald, some of which have not been published before, will be very welcome to his many friends. For it is as a friend that those must love him who love him at all. And how many do! Bernard Barton, to whom the letters are addressed, will be remembered more by them than by his many volumes of verse. But if Barton was not a poet he was a lovable man, as he appears in Fitzgerald's sketch prefixed to the 1849 volume of selections, and in a little biography based upon that written by E. V. Lucas. For forty years he lived as a banker's clerk at Woodbridge. During that time he said of himself that he "had taken as little exercise as a milestone, and far less fresh air." But Fitzgerald has fixed him for ever, like a vision, in that Suffolk landscape that now seems visionary too. "He would, after going a little way, with much humorous grumbling at the useless fatigue he was put to endure, stop short of a sudden, and sitting down in the tall grass by the riverside, watch the tide run past, and the long-remembered vessels gliding into harbour, or dropping down to pursue their voyage under the stars at sea, until his companions, returning from their prolonged walk, drew him to his feet again, to saunter homeward far more willingly than he set forth, with the prospect of the easy chair, the book, and the cheerful supper before him."

In earlier life he was more mobile, and used to walk over to Playford, where he would meet "George Airy, now Astronomer Royal, then a lad of wonderful promise." And that had a sequel. Barton objected to the repeal of the Corn Laws, and used to write to Sir Robert Peel on the subject. He once proposed to the Prime Minister to meet him at a soirée of Lord Northampton's, that he might explain to him how wrong he was. Peel replied by asking him to dinner, and the dinner is elaborately described in the volume before us: "In the vestibule four or six powdered men-folk in livery, with a formidable perspective of more of the same sort on the different landings of the staircase. One of these took my hat and gloves; another inquired my name, which he called out to one on the first landing, who passed it on; it was repeated by the last at the door of the room just as I was entering, and Sir Robert came forward to welcome me in a manner more frank and cordial than I could have at all looked for." Three guests, and three only, had already arrived. The name of one of these sounded like Fairish. But "I looked at him more closely, and putting out my hand, exclaimed, in a tone by no means of the lowest key, 'George Airy!'" This *rencontre* put an entirely new aspect on the whole meeting, and, in spite of the splendour of all around me, and dining off plate, and sitting down with about thirty other guests to be served by a host of liveried lacqueys, I felt as much at home as if I had been dining at Lesgrave, Boulge, or Loudham." The evening, in short, was a success, and "I left his Premiership, after a leave-taking as seemingly cordial as his reception, with certainly no diminished feelings of respect and esteem for the *Man*." How charming and how innocent what is called snobbery can be; and how it is in the blood of every Englishman!

As to Fitzgerald himself, the letters confirm, and make yet more precise, one's picture of him. This, for instance, is delightful: "I spent one evening with Carlyle, but was very dull somehow, and delighted to get out into the street. An organ was playing a polka even so late in the street; and Carlyle was rather amazed to see me polka down the pavement. He shut his street-door—to which he always accompanies you—with a kind of groan; he was looking well—but he says he gets no sleep of nights. This comes of having a great idea, which, germinating in the mind, grows like a tapeworm, and consumes the vitals. What a nasty idea!"

Fitzgerald, it is clear, had not learned hero-worship from the Sage. He knew most of the men of letters among the Victorians, and his judgment of them was very candid, for all his affection. He loved Alfred Tennyson (though not,

one thinks, as much as his brother Frederick). But he did not idolize either him or his works. "When I got to my lodgings I found A. Tennyson installed in them; he has been here ever since in a very uneasy state, being really ill in a nervous way. . . . I have also made him out of sorts by desiring a truce from complaints and complainings. Poor fellow! he is quite magnanimous and noble natured, with no meanness or vanity or affectation of any kind whatever—but very perverse, according to the nature of his illness. So much for poets, who, one must allow, are many of them a very tetchy race." And he goes on to instance "that great metaphysical, Doric, moral, religious, psychological poet of the age, William Wordsworth, who doesn't like to be contradicted at all: nor to be neglected in any way."

But if he would not treat other men as heroes, however dear they were to him—or because they were dear to him—still less did he desire to be so treated himself. His indifference, or supposed indifference, to the truth of the Evangelical doctrine seems, at one time, to have vexed his friend Crabbe, who was wrestling with it. And Fitzgerald writes: "I am dropped out of his category of heroes for ever! He shall always be right glad to see me, he says: but he can never be disappointed in me again. How much the best footing is this to be upon with all one's friends!" Fitzgerald ought to know, for he is, as it were, the Platonic idea of the friend. The brief and lamentable episode of his marriage is told here, perhaps as fully as it ever will be or need be. It passed in a few months, and he resumed that life in his remote village which was mainly meditation on, and epistles to, his friends. There was, as Lord Grey of Fallodon says in his discreet and sympathetic Foreword, something of "kindly mystery" about him. And mysteries are only revealed to initiates.

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

## CHEKHOV TRANSLATED.

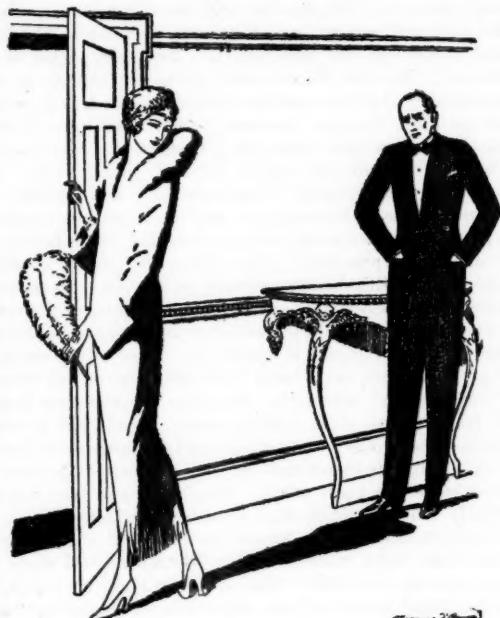
**Three Sisters and Other Plays.** By ANTON TCHEHOV. Translated by CONSTANCE GARNETT. (Chatto & Windus. 3s. 6d.)

**Anton Chehov: a Critical Study.** By WILLIAM GERHARDI. (Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d.)

MRS. GARNETT, benefactress of the age, has now completed her translation of Chekhov. This, the last volume of the series, contains two four-act plays—"Three Sisters" and "Ivanov"—and five short pieces. "Ivanov" was produced in 1887 (Chekhov was then twenty-seven) and "Three Sisters" in 1901 (three years before his death), so that the span of the author's singular development lies between them, from the melodramatic awkwardness of the earlier play to the highly elaborated art of the later. The story of the three provincial sisters who live for years in the hope, and always apparently with the near prospect, of settling in Moscow—who live as they may on the receding prospect and the hope deferred—is probably a work of much distinction, as it is certainly one of ingenuity. But, unhappily, there is for the English reader, in these dramatic pieces, only too much need of guessing and surmising, of telling himself that the play is "probably" this or that. They are swathed in a veil which it is impossible to strip away entirely, and which perpetually hampers a really close view of them. They are translated from Russian into English.

In narrative the veil is of far less account, and there Mrs. Garnett has often made us forget it altogether. But in dialogue the difficulty is immensely increased, and in dialogue such as Chekhov's it may perhaps be insuperable. In the compression of the play-form a dramatist is forced to use the little hour or two at his disposal with exceeding thriftness; every minute is precious, every word must fully do its part—and not only every word, but every tone and shade of expression in the word. It means that, far more than we habitually notice, the story is told by the texture, the surface, the complexion of the phrasing. A hint of character in the speaker is conveyed by the kind of slang he uses, the kind of joke he laughs at, the kind of apology with which he arrives late for luncheon; and to pick up the hint aright demands in the spectator a perfect sympathy with the implications and associations of the idiom. At any rate, it is

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*The Shadow of Doubt*

## ON WRITING

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

THE gods have not cursed me with the vice of envy. So long as one's own immaterial possessions are treasured, and one's creative instincts are fostered, envy becomes a decayed emotion.

It is only when the grim necessity to work is thrust before one that one feels resentful. And it is only honest to confess that when I read of a successful novelist or dramatist tapping out poetic fiction on a typewriter for two hours each afternoon, or perforating to a sympathetic dictaphone in the early hours of the morning, I am filled with an amazement akin to malice. Once I saw a three-act play in the West End that took the author only three days to write. When it was produced I felt astonished that it took so long.

Such creations are the loosely conceived evaporation of the mechanical mind. Even the lightest of essays requires a confinement of thought, and the production of any work of value is a pain to the creator. The period of gestation is torture; it is only when the after-birth of proofs is cleared away that the real appreciation of conception comes.

"It must be splendid to write," said an enthusiast to me. "It is hell to write," said I. "But it is splendid to have written."

Who wants to write when the sun is shining and life can be lived? It is only in the quietness of the night, when the quick of the day and the dance of the night are over that the seductive mood to express oneself occurs.

It is detestable to be compelled to write to order or to time: to finish a book within a fixed period, to criticise a play on the same night, to write a political article on the demand of the moment. Therefore, now that manna is falling upon me from the clouds, I shall give up such prostitution of an art.

These odd notes are supposed to be an advertisement for Pope and Bradley. It is a moot point whether this business is the most successful of its class in Great Britain because of, or despite of, my writings. In case there is a doubt, it would be wiser to put the cause down to the excellent cut of Pope and Bradley's trousers. Lounge Suits from £9 9s. Dinner Suits from £14 14s. Dress Suits from £16 16s. Overcoats from £7 7s. Riding Breeches from £4 14s. 6d.

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peculiarly so in a play like this of Chekhov's, where some of the most impalpable forms and imperceptible movements of character are the story; and how is a translator, any translator, to meet the difficulty in his case?—

MASHA: Damnation take it, I am to be bored a whole evening at the headmaster's!

TUSENBACH: I wouldn't go if I were you. . . . It's very simple.

TCHEBUTYKIN: Don't go, my love.

MASHA: Oh yes, don't go! . . . It's a damnable life, insufferable. . . . (goes to the dining-room).

TCHEBUTYKIN: Come, come.

SOLYONY: Chook, chook, chook. . . .

What are they saying, what do they mean? Is "damnation" as round an oath in Russian, for a schoolmaster's wife to use in a provincial drawing-room, as it is in English? Is to say "chook, chook" a recognized way of being amusing in Russian? And, if so, how amusing is it? These distressing perplexities, not, perhaps, singly very serious, are continually mounting up as the play proceeds; their cumulative effect is great. It may be that Mrs. Garnett tries to keep too closely to the Russian wording; she might have allowed herself a looser rule in dialogue. But the difficulty spreads and spreads as one considers it.

It is disappointing to find that Mr. Gerhardi, in this and other matters, is not as helpful as he might be. It was natural to expect something very acute and ironic and perceptive on a Russian theme from the author of "Futility"; but the company of Chekhov seems to constrain and embarrass Mr. Gerhardi's ease. He is impressed by Chekhov to the point of celebrating him in what is surely agreed to be the least judicious form of homage—that in which the hero is exalted by the disparagement and the degradation of everyone else. It is made clear that Mr. Gerhardi thinks poorly of everyone else in comparison with Chekhov, but of Chekhov himself his account is rather shadowy. Sometimes he seems to praise Chekhov as the sole fount of great qualities which many a good writer of the past has never lacked. But there is entertainment in his book, and usefulness, too—though more biographical detail, and an index, would much have increased the last.

PERCY LUBBOCK.

#### THE RESTORATION STAGE.

**A History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700.** By ALLARDYCE NICOLL. (Cambridge University Press. 16s.)

A SCHOLARLY, a laborious, compilation has long been needed to correct the hasty and often savage generalizations of the larger historians, as well as to give the student an instrument to test both the sweet murmurings of the discursive critics and the heroic charges of knights-errant. At last we have this book, complete, close packed, but not more heavily than need be for one which should remain for some years the standing authority. As a detailed record of what exactly happened on the Restoration stage it is invaluable. Admirably arranged, it deals in turn with the theatre, the actors, the various types of tragedy and comedy, and closes with extremely useful appendices on stage history—gold for the student—and a list of plays. Mr. Nicoll arrays his facts without riding any whirlwinds, and accepts this drama for what it was. If he never makes an illuminating analysis, he is free to argue that his history, properly so named, is not of the interpretative sort; and, if admirers of Dryden and Congreve feel that he a little lacks enthusiasm, this, too, he may claim as merit in an historian.

Mr. Nicoll brings unusual impartiality to his consideration of the origins of Restoration drama, which, he rightly says, may be "explained by a threefold formula—Elizabethan substratum, the spirit of the age, and foreign influence." But if he refuses to enlist under Mr. Gosse's French banner, it is a pity that he falls into the error, common to nearly all writers on this period, of stating without illustration. As regards comedy, for example, a few well-selected passages from Brome's "Mad Couple Well Match'd," Shirley's "Lady of Pleasure," and Massinger's "City Madam," paralleled by others from Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve, would kill this controversy, and prove the Comedy of Manners chiefly "woven in English looms," to use Dryden's phrase. Still,

Mr. Nicoll is the first, since Swinburne suggested it, to point the finger: it is for us to find the way.

There is, as Mr. Nicoll observes, no rigid dividing line between the comedies of *Humours* and *Manners*; nor is there between the "inherent characteristics" and "acquired follies" they used as material. As Congreve's *Scandal* noted, there is "no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality," and Congreve, as much as Shadwell, based himself on the induction to "Every Man Out of His Humour." But Mr. Nicoll is misled by the change in style into thinking that the comedy of *Manners* was less in earnest than its elder brother, whereas it was even more bitterly critical. It was more than the reflection of a dizzy world; its wit was poisoned as well as pointed: it meant to "lash the crying age," though sometimes art transcended the limited purpose. The new style was due to the new inquiring temper, a new orientation, of which the linguistic polish was but another expression, since controversy needs a swifter weapon. For Elizabethan comedy based itself on a metaphysic, while Restoration comedy was intent upon dissecting the result of men's wild experiments in life amid a chaos of values. Being critical, it voiced the conservative reaction, and all its writers, save "easy Etherege," summoned ridicule to "cure excess," especially, since this was the most important issue of the time, sexual excess. And, not to avoid this side-issue, since Restoration comedy is largely the history of man's failure to rationalize sex, it is fruitless to deplore the "smuttiness" of these plays. Mr. Nicoll swallows his peg manfully, but complains that it tastes of whisky.

Unfortunately, facts cannot be arranged without some assumptions being made, and Mr. Nicoll's critical dicta are not always beyond cavil. And, if in the main he brings his own judgment to the subject, especially on the safer ground of tragedy and the heroic drama, in comedy he is too prone to adopt labels, and be Mr. Palmer's disciple. It is time a protest were made against dubbing Macaulay's enemy of Restoration comedy, when the truth is that he urged it should be read for its revelation of mankind and for its literary value. Most monstrous of all is the habit of styling Congreve callous. To say that "the dialogue of Millamant and Mirabell is as cold and chill as Cinthia's beams" is an offence as black as to say with Meredith that Millamant is "a type of the superior ladies who do not think," or with Thackeray that "The Way of the World" is "a weary banquet of wit where no love is." Much of Congreve vibrates with passion; he constantly makes one think of Stendhal's "Je fais tous les efforts possibles pour être sec. . . . Je tremble toujours de n'avoir écrit un soupir, quand je crois avoir noté une vérité." But cynical? Heartless? And all the other Victorian echoes? Congreve's lines, like Cinthia's beams, may look cold, but both may work on the emotions with effects that are startling and warm.

BONAMY DOBRÉE.

#### NOVELS.

**The Richest Man.** By EDWARD SHANKS. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)  
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**The Finger-Post.** By MRS. HENRY DUDENEY. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

**A Week.** By JURY LIBEDINSKY. (Allen & Unwin. 5s.)

THESE five books differ considerably in intention and treatment, and it would be hard to find a common principle among them. Mr. Shanks obviously means to amuse; and so also does Mr. Thomas Cobb. Their books leave us neither with a heart-ache nor a head-ache; but there the resemblance ends. "The Richest Man" is a melodrama, fantastic in conception, leisurely in action, true to its proposed end of providing us with a thrill, but often looking wistfully towards milder methods and less sensational events. We enjoy the excitement, when it comes; it is touch-and-go, and the stakes are high; a world-war hangs in the balance. Can Mr. Williams, who is "almost as rich as the rest of the world put together," avert the calamity? One great difficulty of melodrama is its tendency to be headstrong with its characters; it demands the suppression of their personalities, making them, in the dramatic if not in the ordinary sense, "straight."

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Mr. Shanks's people are not mere cannon-fodder, and they have plenty of time, before the storm breaks, to let us know what they are like. Hollis is a lovable rogue; Williams a humanitarian financier with a streak of cowardice; Daubney a Cambridge Don almost too mild-mannered for such rough work. But the revolver is a great leveller; and it is hard to distinguish between them when each has one in his pocket.

The plot by which Ursula was to be deceived owes something to King Lear; only here, more reasonably, the partition is merely threatened, not put into practice. A hint that the size of their portions is to be contingent on behaviour is enough to bring Mr. Anderby's unruly children to their knees. Wilfrid settles down to his law-final; Elinor forgoes Florence; Ursula abandons the project of making her father sleep in his study while his bedroom is reserved for distinguished guests. The quiet comedy that surrounds the character of Ursula is the best thing in a sensible, unpretentious, if rather unreal, book.

There are at least two triangles in Mr. Maurice Baring's story: the triangle of viewpoints from which the narrative is unfolded, and the more obvious triangle formed by the relationships with which the narrative deals. A lawyer, a doctor, and a priest kept records of the incident as it affected them. They all wrote simply and sincerely, as though on oath; but why they felt it necessary to keep these records Mr. Baring does not explain. All three accounts are so circumstantial, so ready with fact and so sparing of opinion, that, necessarily, many furrows are ploughed two and even three times. Counting the "erratum" which bids us delete the information from the doctor's narrative, we are told no fewer than four times that David Aston lost his arm as a result of the war. Frankly, we feel that nothing is gained and a good deal is lost by Mr. Baring's handling of his theme. The separate narratives, with their deliberate reticence, at first impressive but afterwards pompous, reveal neither their authors' nor their subject's characters. The solution to the puzzle, which should, one imagines, have been deducible by a collation of the narratives in the fashion of the comparative historian, depends for its confirmation on an accident—the delirious confession of a dying maid-servant. It is a pity that Mr. Baring did not find a theme weighty enough for his style, which has always the air and authority of a last will and testament.

Mrs. Dudeney and Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith are near neighbours artistically, and, in "The Finger-Post," geographically also. The Durrants have been from time immemorial thatchers in the Sussex Weald; and this useful calling has bred in them a pride which nothing, not even the supersession of thatch by slates, is able to quench. Their younger son, a weakling physically incapable of mounting a ladder, and, in the eyes of his family and neighbours, a "natural," "tuppence-ha'penny short of a shilling," as they put it, despises his forbears and hungers for gentility. From a builder's apprentice he becomes a local financial magnate to whom his parents must look for support, and his brother, a Durrant of the old school, for an occupation. The tables are turned. Mrs. Dudeney has drawn an effective character in Joseph. Besides the ruthlessness, meanness, and secret depravity which much modern fiction teaches us to expect in the peasantry, he has a curious strain of generosity and sensibility which makes him, though dreadful and deplorable, also human and convincing.

The chief interest of "A Week," by Iury Libedinsky, lies not in the events it records, which are bloody and savage, nor in its characters, who are seen for the most part either through the smoke of battle or in *articulo mortis*; but in its unlikeness to pre-revolutionary Russian fiction. The feeling of fatalism has gone; everyone takes sides, and even those who are too unintelligent to know which side is which, are organized and made to listen to orators. Gone also are the moral uncertainties and self-reviews, gone the spirit of contemplation fretting itself into illogical and outrageous action. Russia, by this account, is no longer the "anonymous Russia," bullied and exploited by bureaucracy, of Turgenev's "On the Eve," but a self-conscious country where the poorest people read or try to read the newspapers, and wait upon public events.

L. P. HARTLEY.

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We cannot congratulate Messrs. Cassell either on their "Master-Painters of the World" series or on their "Gems of Art." The "popular" nature of these two series is shown by the inclusion in them of painters who could hardly be considered worthy of such an exalted rank except in the estimation of a public whose artistic education and taste are dependent on books of this kind. Even if the publishers had confined themselves wholly to British painters—which, in point of fact, they have very nearly done—they might have made a better selection. The difference between the two series is rather one of price and size than of quality; the reproductions, of which there are eight in each of the smaller books and about twice that number in each of the larger, are not at all satisfactory as coloured reproductions, and convey little idea of their originals. They are printed on a kind of linen-faced paper which is, no doubt, intended to give the impression of canvas, but the grain and surface quality never vary, either according to the size of the picture or the individual "paint" quality of the artist; also, there is only a certain range of colours into which all colours are reduced, destroying subtleties and intermediate tones. As a result there is a horrible similarity between Gainsborough and Millais, between Rembrandt and Watts; they all have the same unpleasant oleographic smoothness, and in the case of the "Gems of Art" the reproductions are made worse by having practically no margin round them on the page. Perhaps they are simply intended to be cut out, framed in gilt, and hung on the walls of suburban best spare-rooms. The letterpress, from the biographical point of view, is full of interesting information; but it is a pity that books on art, which are, presumably, intended to be "educational," should in some cases have been entrusted to writers with very foggy ideas on painting. Mr. Rimbault Dibbin, who writes on Gainsborough and Watts, places the latter on the very highest scale of human artistic achievement (comparing him, on the whole, favourably with Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Giotto, and Blake), simply on the score of his versatility and of the sublime literary scope of his subjects, and almost disregarding the other much more important qualities which go to make up great painting. Nor does one feel ready altogether to trust a critic who, writing of Gainsborough, speaks of the eighteenth century as "those benighted days"—apparently because people often drank too much. Let us see whether prohibition in America will produce a Gainsborough.

Miss Pendered has written an agreeable study of an artist who, though tremendously popular and successful in his own day, is now almost unknown. John Martin was a painter of the most unrestrained romanticism; his pictures are full of giddy heights and black depths, of hurtling rocks, crumbling palaces, and incredible storms; something of the same love of vertiginous sky-effects can be seen in the work of his greater contemporary Turner. Martin chose vast Biblical and historical subjects, rather in the manner of Gustave Doré, and his pictures have an interest that is almost purely literary. One feels that had he lived to-day he might have been a very good film-producer. His success in his own day was enormous; his pictures found their way into most of the royal collections of Europe, and he was

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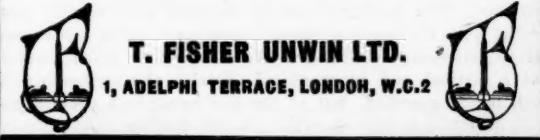
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Mr. Blamire Young, in "The Proverbs of Goya," hails himself as "just the person expected by the great Spaniard" to explain the mysterious series of problem etchings, the "Proverbios" or "Disparates." It is impossible, in looking at them, not to wonder why Goya made these curious pictures; most of them are undoubtedly below the level of the rest of his work, and, if they contain all the meaning that Mr. Young claims for them, one can only feel that they are expressed in a wrong medium. Certainly Mr. Young has expended a great deal of ingenuity and trouble; but his solutions are sometimes most improbable, far-fetched, and arbitrary, and not always very profound in philosophical significance, in spite of the fact that he lays great emphasis on Goya's profound and fearless thinking. Though we cannot agree that Mr. Young has, as he announces in his preface, "added another jewel to the crown" of Spain, it is nevertheless interesting to have the "Disparates" quite well reproduced in popular form, even if we do not always agree with, or see any necessity for, Mr. Young's elaborate explanations.

Mr. R. A. Walker's book on Aubrey Beardsley is rather in the nature of a memorial than of a book of drawings. It is announced as the first instalment of a complete work, and consists of a somewhat scratch collection of a few drawings, of photographs, portraits, and caricatures of Beardsley, photographs of the houses he lived in, and of the grave at Mentone in which he was buried. It contains, however, one really fine drawing, "Apollo Pursuing Daphne," which shows Beardsley at his best as a first-rate draughtsman, with a masterly strength and economy of line and a fine sense of linear design. The drawing is unfinished and is apparently only a part of the original design, but stands perfectly well (and very likely better) by itself. There is also included a painting, "Caprice," which is interesting, not because it is a good painting, but because it is almost the only attempt Beardsley made in that medium. It has very much the feeling of a stage decoration, and shows clearly that Beardsley was by nature a decorator and a draughtsman; perhaps the experiment in painting made him realize his limitations, for he certainly never tried much to develop his powers in that direction. His amusing caricature of Britannia, which originally appeared in "Punch's Almanack," is also included. The book is got up in a rather unnecessarily sumptuous and expensive manner, as also is Mr. Christopher Millard's "The Printed Work of Claud Lovat Fraser." This is simply a bibliography of Fraser's work in broadsides, books, posters, periodicals, &c., with a few rather dull drawings reproduced, including the artist's portrait of himself. Of the drawings, one is clever in its extreme simplification—"Dandy," used for a Christmas card—but "Eve with her Basket," which was never used, is clumsy in treatment and very commonplace; of the other two, one is a book-cover, the other a quite attractive poster of a large red lobster. The book will no doubt be welcomed by the public, as Fraser seems to have a very large number of admirers. It is compiled in a business-like way, and its principle is undoubtedly sound.

Professor Rothenstein's "Twenty-four Portraits" cannot be said to have much artistic value, and from the historical point of view it is, to say the least, a little over-rosy. Looking at it with unprejudiced eyes, one would say that we lived in a golden period of romantic-looking geniuses. The portraits are of eminent men mostly connected with the modern literary movement, with one or two artists, musicians, and politicians thrown in. Each portrait has a critical and biographical sketch; the authorship of each is not specified, but at the beginning is a general list from which it is seen that the literary portion comes almost

entirely from the subjects of the portraits; whether they wrote their own or each other's, who shall say? Professor Rothenstein has a certain gift for superficial likeness, but beyond that his portraits cannot be said to give much idea of the personality of the sitter, and as regards likeness they are considerably idealized. Purely from the point of view of a drawing, perhaps the portrait of the Hon. Bertrand Russell is the best; in it there is at least a certain method of treatment running right through the drawing, but then it is not particularly characteristic of its subject. Most of the drawings are dull and commonplace, and any special characteristics are reduced to the same level of uninspired obviousness. Even in the case of Mr. Augustus John, where the rather romantic method would have been amply justified, it has failed completely, and Mr. John is made to look quite ordinary and insignificant. Professor Rothenstein seems to regard his sitters with the aid of a pair of compasses and a ruler, rather than with the eye of an artist.

Mr. Max Beerbohm, on the other hand, is as fresh and delightful as ever. His "Things New and Old" is mainly composed of the caricatures from his last exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, and some may think it a pity that he has still excluded those drawings which were withdrawn from the exhibition, since on a question of that kind a book is hardly to be judged from the same standpoint as a public exhibition. Some very interesting early works, dating from the 'seventies, are also included; truly, it seems, age cannot wither nor custom stale. The caricatures are somewhat uneven from the point of view of drawing. Mr. Beerbohm is not so successful when he uses pen and ink, as in the pictures of Sir Arthur Pinero and Mr. Conrad; the drawing of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, too, seems to miss his usual subtlety and fineness of line. But the majority of the drawings are as good as have ever come from Mr. Beerbohm—the caricature of Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson, for instance, with the preposterous figure of "Success," and those of Mr. Lytton Strachey and of the brothers Sitwell, and "The rare, the rather awful visits of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, to Windsor Castle," which is rich in that particular flavour of irreverent yet kindly humour which Mr. Beerbohm seems to reserve for the Royal Family.

ANGUS DAVIDSON.

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Where all the pictures are so good the difficulty is to pick out any special plate for remark; but a particularly lovely one is that of Capercaillie. A magnificent old cock,

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with a hen beside him, stands on a pine stump, and behind them stretch grey pine woods, fading into distant purple hills. Another very charming plate is that giving small sketches of the different forms of the pheasant—both in drawing and colouring these studies are hard to beat. The letterpress, of course, plays but a minor part in this fine book, but short and accurate accounts are given of each species.

In "Birds and Their Young" we have an interesting and well-written account of bird life from Mr. Coward's authoritative pen. He deals with nests, eggs, nestlings, behaviour of the young, food, &c., and devotes his last chapter to courtship and display, giving fascinating accounts of the love-making of various species, including that of the robin. He says:—

"Considering how constantly we see the robin it is very remarkable how few have witnessed the display, for it is certainly a remarkable performance. As a matter of fact the excited male robin looks so utterly absurd that it may be excused if it prefers to do its love-making in private. Both head and tail are stiffly raised, so that they almost meet above the back, and he hops from bough to bough in this unnatural attitude, puffing out his breast and swaying from side to side in front of the female, evidently to make the most of his coloured shirt front."

The book is well got up and attractively illustrated in colour, but the picture of the merlin shows it with, apparently, a yellow iris, like the sparrow-hawk, whereas this little falcon has dark eyes.

Another book dealing exclusively with birds is Professor J. Arthur Thomson's "Biology of Birds." He deals with the structure of birds, adaptations, migration, courtship, and sex, &c.; but perhaps his most interesting and valuable chapters are those on the mental powers of birds, and on their relations with other species in the great "Web of Life." As regards their mental powers he truly says that the difficulty is to decide between "nature" and "nurture"—i.e., between instinct and experience. It is the opinion of the present writer that the observer is more likely to overestimate than underestimate the influence of inherited instinct, and that the majority of birds depend to a great extent on what they learn. She has taken birds from the nest, hand-reared them, and been astonished at the limitations of their instinctive knowledge and the amount they had to learn. Professor Thomson also lays stress on the inter-relations of various species of birds, and also of birds with plants and mammals, pointing out how interference by man with any one species reacts in ever-widening circles far beyond the particular bird.

The interrelation of species is also emphasized in Mr. Buxton's book on desert life, in which he deals with the general characteristics of deserts, their aridness, and the environment to which the plant or animal must adapt itself in order to survive, the presence of animal life invariably depending on the existence of a scanty vegetation. The book is full of original and valuable observations, and gives the reader much food for thought—take, for instance, his remarks on the coloration of the desert animals. He first points out that, as is well known, pale, sandy tints are characteristic of desert fauna in all parts of the world, the commonly accepted explanation being that such tints are protective. But, he asks, how can such tints be protective to subterranean species, nocturnal species, &c.? He quotes many facts bearing on the point, and comes to the conclusion that, as regards many desert species, "protective coloration" has nothing to do with their hue, which he attributes to a combination of climatic conditions found in the arid regions of the world.

An important work on insects published this autumn is Dr. Morton Wheeler's book on social insects. The wonders and mysteries of insect organization are placed before us, and the chapters on ants should appeal to the non-scientific as well as to the scientific reader. Dr. Wheeler deals at length with their extraordinary specialized instincts and their habits of slave-making and parasitism; the "domestic animals," their "pets," and their cultivation of plants and fungi, are dealt with in full. He shows that ants are no late result of evolution, but from the specimens found fossilized in Baltic amber must have been as highly specialized in the Lower Oligocene period as they are now.

Evidently the ant had evolved its social system while man was still skulking in the tree-tops.

The marvels and extraordinary limitations of the insect mind are again set forth for us in the latest volume from the pen of the inimitable Fabre. The Languedocian scorpion is the subject, and the great naturalist takes us step by step through the insect's life, telling us simply, vividly, yet with almost painful accuracy, the facts as he discovered them. Reading the narrative we realize that here was a man who wrote to record what he discovered, not to make a book to please the public, yet his records surpass in vividness the most hair-raising novel, and we are left with a clear-cut impression of the scorpion as an individual, a personality, very different from a human personality, yet a being with loves and hates.

"Animal Personalities" is a title that covers a collection of pleasant anecdotes of dogs and of beasts at the New York Zoo, but the Americanisms that creep in here and there mar it for the English reader.

F. P.

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF JINGOISM.

**The East India Trade in the Seventeenth Century.** By SHAFAT AHMAD KHAN. (Oxford University Press. 14s.)

IN 1673 Dryden put upon the stage his "Amboyna; or, the Cruelties of the Dutch to the English Merchants," a tragedy of which Sir Walter Scott observes: "This play is beneath criticism, and I can hardly hesitate to term it the worst production Dryden ever wrote." "Amboyna" is far from being a masterpiece; but a pleasant evening can still be spent with it and 250 years is a long life for war propaganda. The play was produced during the Second Dutch War with the object of stimulating hatred of the Dutch and love for the East India Company.

"Tell my friends" [cries the dying hero],  
"I died so as  
Became a Christian and a man; give to my brave  
Employers of the East India Company  
The last remembrance of my faithful service:  
Tell them I seal that service with my blood;  
And, dying, wish to all their factories  
And all the famous merchants of our isle,  
That wealth their generous industry deserves."

The chief point to be immediately noticed is that in 1673 Dryden commemorated on the English stage the Massacre of Amboyna, which occurred in 1622, and the disgrace of which was only wiped out with further bloodshed fifty years later. How this came to be is the subject of Mr. Khan's compact and lucid volume.

The Dutch, our rivals for so long in the Spice Islands, adopted from the very beginning the policy of mercantilism, which in more modern parlance is termed "Trade follows the flag." Behind the Dutch merchants was arrayed the full force of the Dutch Executive and the Dutch fleet. The Dutch and only the Dutch should trade in the Spice Islands. The English bourgeoisie could not but feel that it was owing to English efforts that such a nation as the Dutch existed at all; they were incensed in their feelings as well as impoverished in their pockets by the monopoly exercised by the Dutch, and declaimed loudly against Batavian ingratitude. But

"Let not virtue seek  
Remuneration for the thing it was."

The Armada was safe at the bottom of the sea, and the Dutch were only too anxious to forget all about it. The merchants naturally enough put pressure on the Government to safeguard British interests abroad. James I., however, was a man of peace in need of Dutch assistance in Europe; and unfortunately the East India Company was unpopular in England, because it was thought to impoverish the country by sending bullion abroad. In any case, the Company did pretty well out of its trade in spite of occasional disasters such as the massacre of Amboyna and continual irritation and persecution at the hands of the more powerful Hollanders. But, more perhaps through circumstances than through virtue, British Imperialists early became partisans of the principle of liberty of trade, which has remained the most admirable feature of British Imperial expansion.

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Mr. Khan makes this question of Anglo-Dutch friction in the Spice Islands the keynote to British foreign policy during the seventeenth century, and traces the increasingly successful efforts of the East India Company to overcome the scruples of British Government and its own unpopularity with the masses, till in time it was able to utilize the full force of the English executive in its troubles with the Dutch. There was nothing much to be done while James I. and Charles I. were on the throne, and, although the Protector showed himself more sympathetic, the company did not attain its heart's desire till the Restoration. Charles II., that most modern of men, came back to England determined to push British trade, and for the first time the Company was in clover.

It is possible to approve or to disapprove commercial wars, but accepting the point of view of Mr. Khan, Charles's foreign policy becomes intelligible, and what is usually considered patriotic. When we see our ally Louis XIV. overrunning Flanders and compelling the Dutch to inundate their country, it is unnecessary to indulge in Macaulayan frenzy at Caroline turpitude. Liberty of trade in the Spice Islands was being debated amid the dykes of the Low Countries. The realist, unromantic Charles was a better Imperialist than his more picturesque opposites. The whole business has a modern ring: we can almost hear the thunders of Socialist idealists declaiming against the trade war engineered by capitalists. Certainly in matters of commerce, as in so many other things, the reign of Charles II. may be considered the beginning of modern English history. As we work along purely economic and commercial lines, we may see a unity, that at first sight seems lacking, in the policy of the Stuarts and of William. Under Charles, England for the first time set out to win the commercial hegemony of the world.

Mr. Khan's treatise explains with detailed clearness how all this came about, and his book is a valuable addition to the economic history of England. It is noteworthy that the historian to whom he refers most frequently is von Ranke.

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### Studies in Idealism. By HUGH L'ANSON FAUSSET. (Dent. 6s.)

It is a little odd that Mr. Fausset has, as his own "King Charles's head," a particularly Victorian concept—the universality of evolution. The book is competent, the result of serious thought, but to the reader it will prove rather dull and wanting in clarity, because it is lacking in pointed phrases which arrest the attention and thereby lead to understanding. Mr. Fausset sometimes falls into that pomposity which he so much deplores in the Victorians, without attaining their dignity. The depth of conviction expressed with such fierce yet obvious sincerity in the last chapter comes as an agreeable surprise. The Victorian Age is boldly described as "The Stricken Years," and in rather under thirty pages the author sets out to demolish its art and literature. Some of his older readers will acknowledge a certain force and truth in this attack, but they will be perfectly clear that his lack of sympathy has made him miss much of the meaning, and caused him to underrate the beauty of what they hold is still living and permanent in the work of that age. Mr. Fausset should remember that thirty pages is not enough to sum up or condemn any age. In the last chapter the author sets out to perform the most important task of any critic, viz., to show what is good in the work of his day, while admitting its limitations. Serious readers of modern poetry will agree that there are many living poets who have something new to say, and are actually adding to the poetic glory which the world has admitted belongs to England.

### The Economic Development of France and Germany, 1815-1914. By J. H. CLAPHAM. Second Edition. (Cambridge University Press. 16s.)

It is pleasing to be able to welcome this second edition of Dr. Clapham's scholarly and limpid treatise. Readers will find no important alterations from the text of the first edition, but will welcome the addition of four skeleton maps. The need of these was felt before, but their inclusion was rendered impossible by cost of printing. A few more footnotes have been added, but Dr. Clapham rightly sticks to his principle of not terrifying the student with innumerable

references and swollen bibliographies. It is late in the day to praise Dr. Clapham's book, which received due commendation on its appearance. But the present reviewer, who once sat for the Cambridge Historical Tripos, can only regret that he had the misfortune of having been born too early to profit in youth from reading such a book as this.

### Drink in 1914-1922: a Lesson in Control. By ARTHUR SHADWELL, M.D. (Longmans. 10s. 6d.)

Dr. SHADWELL's book gives an admirable and impartial statement of the various measures of liquor-control adopted by Great Britain during the past nine years. He also presents, in a convenient form, the coincident statistics of output, taxation, and convictions for drunkenness. The facts seem beyond dispute; and certain conclusions—in no way forced by the author—seem to stand out. The book is one which should be studied by everyone who proposes to reflect, speak, or write on the subject.

## THE DRAMA

### THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING INTELLIGENT.

Haymarket Theatre: "The Importance of Being Earnest." By Oscar Wilde.

The revival of "The Importance of Being Earnest" might well have been an occasion of great interest. The prospect was certainly the cause of much pleasing anticipation, followed at least by an equally strong disillusion; and for this the author has had to shoulder far more than his share of the blame.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" is now passing through its most critical period. It is neither new nor old. The first surprise is off the play, and time has as yet added no patina. Also the play, though not frequently seen on the stage, is probably more verbally familiar to playgoers than any other comedy in the world. There can be no moment of astonishment. The verbal brilliance, the carefully pondered situations, may be taken as read.

The English language can boast of few more brilliant comedies. But owing to its familiarity, its purely intellectual appeal, its elaborate artificiality, the author, if he is to enjoy posthumous fame upon the stage, must be singularly happy both in his producer and his actors. Unfortunately, nearly every fault that can well be committed is, at the present moment, being committed at the Haymarket. In a word, this most artificial of comedies was acted as realistically as possible. The general opinion has been expressed that the play should have been staged in "period." As far as it goes, this would perhaps be advantageous, in that a little would have been added to the unreality of the scene. But, in truth, the characters in the comedy are no more 1895 than they are 1923. The requisite artificiality cannot be so easily acquired. For it must be consistent and complete. Everything—acting, scenery, grouping—must be *stilisiert* to the highest possible degree.

Taking a few instances at random, the flat in Act I. was not only ugly in itself, but crammed full of all the cumbrous properties that litter the lumber-room of the theatre. In Miss Cicely Cardew's gardens, every flower was sculpted in the round. The difference between her impossible artificiality and the would-be realism of her surroundings became progressively more grotesque as the scene advanced. Into this scenic absurdity were tossed pell-mell the elaborate puppets of Wilde's fancy, all dressed in the latest fashions, and asking to be accepted as plausible denizens of Mayfair. The slowness with which they spoke their lines was exasperating. The epigrams lingered over their desires before they—at length and with what coy reluctance!—came. All the way through, the audience were three sentences ahead of the actors. It was almost pitiful to watch the unfortunate cast, struggling to make it conceivable that either they or anyone else could have ever said any of the things put into their mouths.

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## ART

### DUTCH TILES.

THE gift to the nation by Mr. Henry Van den Bergh of a collection of old Dutch tiles makes it for the first time possible to study in England an interesting minor phase in the history of art. The vast production of painted tiles in Holland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the outcome of a combination of circumstances. The introduction from the south of a new ceramic technique brought a refined surface and bright colouring within the range of the potters of the Low Countries at a time when those qualities answered exactly the demands of a new era of culture. Success in their long and terrible struggle with Spain had opened for the Dutch the way to the East and the sources of wealth. A higher standard of comfort was one of the results. Reaction from the grim strain of a protracted war created a taste for gay colouring. Both these desiderata—comfort and brightness—were supplied by maiolica, whether in the form of wares for the table or tiles for lining walls, and the consequence was that tiles soon became enormously in demand.

The essential of maiolica technique consists in the coating of a coarse earthenware body with a layer of fine glaze, whitened and made opaque with oxide of tin, providing a suitable surface for painting in various metallic pigments. This process was invented in the Near East, and first introduced into Europe in Spain and Italy. At an early stage it was extended from pottery to tiles which could be used for covering floors, walls, or ceilings. In Italy, painted tiles were largely used for pavements, but only very rarely for wall decoration, for which purpose fresco painting offered a much quicker and easier method. The manufacture of maiolica, both pottery and tiles, was introduced into the Low Countries early in the sixteenth century by an Italian potter who settled at Antwerp; from that city, as we have only lately come to know, it was carried by members of his family, fugitives, it would seem, from religious persecution, into Holland, where, at length, it was to develop into the great industry of Delft. Only in the initial stages were maiolica tiles used in Holland for floors, in substitution for the lead-glazed red tiles with designs in white inlay which were common in all northern countries in the Middle Ages. The Dutch seem to have recognized the possibilities of the new type of tiles for wall covering and decoration, and by the beginning of the seventeenth century the manufacture was already considerable. The tiles were used not only for purely ornamental patterns, based at first on those of the mediæval inlaid floor tiles, but also for large mural pictures; first at Antwerp, and afterwards in Holland, such tile-pictures became popular as a substitute for frescoes, obviously ill-suited to resist the damp fogs of

a country of fens. The great allegorical picture dated 1640 from a design by Joachim Utewael, now part of the large collection of tiles given by Mr. Van den Bergh, through the National Art-Collections Fund, to the Victoria and Albert Museum, shows what wonderful success the Dutch achieved in the practice of this form of mural painting.

It is, however, the pattern tiles, carried out by means of painting over dotted outlines previously "pounced" through a pricked stencil paper, that have the greatest decorative worth. The earliest designs are formal and largely geometrical; these are succeeded by flowers, fruit, or animals stylized with a sure grip on decorative effect, at first within compartments, later free in the middle of the tile, with small corner ornaments, which tend as time goes on steadily to dwindle and at last to disappear. In all these types of tile, though each individual tile shows a design interesting in itself, the full effect is only obtained when the tiles are brought together, as they were intended to be, in panels. The exhibits at South Kensington prove how well the tile designers understood their work; the various motives, whether formal or based on nature, throw themselves into wonderfully rhythmic patterns, in which mass and colour are balanced to perfection.

After the middle of the seventeenth century we notice a complete change of style. The stark but harmonious colouring of the maiolica-painters—blue, orange, green, and purple—gives way to monochrome blue or purple. The change was due partly to the influence of imported blue-and-white Chinese porcelain, partly to one of those tidal movements in culture by which a flow of sensuous colour is followed by an ebb towards monochrome austerity. Concurrently with this revolution in colour came the decay of feeling for breadth of effect. Each tile began to be treated as a unit to receive a picture complete in itself, without regard to its place as part of an extensive pattern. The decadence seen in these later tiles, familiar to all by reason of the great quantities exported to England, should not blind us to the high aesthetic work of Dutch tiles at their best.

BERNARD RACKHAM.

## SCIENCE

### THE DRINKER'S DEFENCE.

THIS book\* loses by the multiplicity of its authors. We are told on its wrapper that the volume's purpose is "to give an impartial account of the effect of alcohol on man." Professor Starling's contribution, which fortunately covers the majority of the pages, accords with this statement; and his conclusions, though definite and obviously such as their author welcomes, are reached quite naturally from the considerable array of facts presented and experiments described; the evidence being treated throughout in that critical and scientific manner which we expect from this distinguished physiologist. But the effect of impartiality and impersonal science is considerably lessened, if not, indeed, destroyed, by the obviously prejudiced and tendentious efforts of his fellow authors.

When we find Dr. Hutchison defining a tonic as "anything which makes a patient feel better"; and Sir Frederick Mott, who, until a month ago, was the pathologist to the London County Council Asylums, arguing for alcohol "that it serves as a means of eliminating poor types, by making such persons anti-social, and thus causing their segregation in asylums and prisons"; and Professor Pearl, of the Johns Hopkins University, telling us encouragingly that a number of guinea-pigs which he kept intoxicated six days a week for six years "far out-lived their untreated brothers and sisters," thus

\* "The Action of Alcohol on Man." By Ernest H. Starling, M.D., F.R.S., Robert Hutchison, M.D., Sir Frederick W. Mott, M.D., F.R.S., and Raymond Pearl, Ph.D. (Longmans. 12s. 6d.)



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showing that "alcohol can be so administered to a living organism as not to affect harmfully the expectation of life," we can but guess that we have accidentally dropped into a meeting of the Brewers' and Distillers' Mutual Admiration Society.

Professor Starling, however, is altogether another matter; and must be taken seriously. In this book, he has marshalled all the available facts relevant to the issue; has given a simple though masterly account of human physiology, so far as it has any bearing on the subject; and argues the matter as becomes a scientist. He writes well and clearly, and avoids the jargon customary with illiterate men of science.

Briefly, his conclusions are these. Alcohol, taken habitually "in excess"—by which he means more than a few pints of beer or a bottle of claret or a few table-spoonfuls of whisky a day—acts as a poison, diminishing mental and physical powers and tending materially to shorten life. People with unstable minds, who have great difficulty in bringing their highest and last-developed faculties into effective operation, as well as the young—in whom the higher powers of control are not yet fully developed—are liable to be rendered still more mentally unstable by even the moderate use of alcohol. Normal people, on the other hand, suffer no physical harm from the regular moderate consumption of alcohol, even if varied by occasional bouts of excess. Three half-pints of beer or three ounces of whisky are completely oxidized, leaving no trace in the body at the end of three and a half hours; and smaller quantities in a much shorter time. Moreover, seeing that alcohol has the effect of disconnecting the higher controlling elements of the mind, it is of great value as affording these faculties a rest, enabling them to start again later with renewed energy and freshness. Indeed, Professor Starling argues, not without feeling, that alcohol is far more necessary to people like physiologists, engaged in severe mental labour, than it is to the common herd; and one feels sure that Sir Frederick Mott and Professor Pearl would wish to include pathologists and statisticians in this Bacchic company.

By conflicting partisans, alcohol is sometimes spoken of as a poison, a drug, or a food; and many words have been scattered, and much temper displayed, in the resulting controversies. Professor Starling shows in elaborate detail how right is the common view that alcohol is all these things. No one can dispute that alcohol, taken in such amount, or with such frequency, as to form more than a minute percentage of the blood, is a poison, occasionally an immediately fatal one. But to argue, as some do, that because a substance acts as a poison when taken in bulk, it must therefore act as a poison, though a less potent one, when taken in small quantities, is to show a complete ignorance both of the nature of evil and of the physiology of the human body. The good and the evil in physiology as in everything else often differ, not in kind but in number. And, in therapeutics, many of our most terrible poisons, when taken by the teaspoonful, are among our most valuable remedial agents when taken by the grain. Even more convincing examples are afforded by those remarkable drugs produced within the body itself for its own regulation. Without a sufficiency of iodothyronin, produced by the thyroid gland, we have cretinism in the child, and myxedema in the adult. With an excess of it, we are poisoned; and suffer from all those symptoms associated with what is known as Graves' disease. Without a certain supply of insulin, produced by the islets within the pancreas, we die of diabetes. An excess of insulin in our blood spells an equally fatal ending.

As a food, alcohol has the peculiar merit of being absorbed without previous digestion, and of being available for combustion and energy-production almost as soon as taken. In those conditions, therefore, in which the digestive powers are at a low ebb, as in many febrile illnesses, alcohol has an occasional food-value which may even mean the difference between death and life. It is to this quality, and not to any mythical power of "stimulation," that the undoubted use of alcohol as a quick restorative in states of exhaustion is due. It cannot safely be taken continuously as a substitute for

carbohydrates and other foods, except in the smallest quantities; but there are occasions—and this is especially true in diabetes—when alcohol is not only a possible, but the only, substitute for starch or sugar as an article of food and a source of energy. Professor Starling tells us that a normal man at rest in bed gives out, as heat, eighteen hundred Calories in the twenty-four hours; and that it is possible to give, in the form of alcohol, as much as 50 per cent. of the basal requirement. He points out that ten ounces of brandy, properly diluted and spaced over the waking hours, could be given without causing any symptoms of intoxication in an ordinary individual; and that, by this means, he would be obtaining about nine hundred Calories.

But it is as a drug, rather than as a food, that alcohol is commonly taken. The popular notion that it acts as a stimulant, in any way increasing the powers of body or mind, will not stand examination. Professor Starling, who presents the best reasoned defence of alcohol with which I am familiar, agrees that alcohol, even in moderate quantities, causes a diminution of function of the highest-level neural mechanisms. It certainly would hinder the solution of complex intellectual problems, as well as feats such as those of the acrobat or juggler, which involve elaborate co-ordination of movement. But man has not proceeded so far in his evolution as to be able to work these higher powers at high pitch for any continuous length of time. Attempts to do so nearly always lead to mental exhaustion, and often to a state strictly pathological. A change of gear is often a strictly hygienic necessity. Most of us know how, from the exaggerated activity of the critical faculties, we are often almost paralyzed in action. To take a common instance, experience has taught many of our greatest orators that only when their self-consciousness and higher critical faculties have been disconnected by means of a glass of whisky or half a bottle of wine can their tongues be loosened and the streams of eloquence and wit run freely.

But it is not only on such special occasions that Professor Starling commends the moderate use of alcohol as a piece of practical hygiene. "Alcoholic drinks," he says, "supply the most wide-spread and easily obtainable means of increasing the pleasure of life and of diminishing the frets and worries of daily existence. When alcohol is taken in moderation, the money spent on it must be compared with that spent on cinemas, theatres, music-halls, novels, and concerts. All these are means which the individual employs to lessen the maladaptations of existence, and to procure himself a respite from reality." And he quotes McCurdy: "Conviviality is more important for the maintenance of our mental stability and effectiveness than we realize. It is because alcohol contributes to sociability that it holds the strong position it does among so many people."

With all this, most people, apart from those in whom natural horror at the terrible results only too commonly following alcoholic excess prevents them from seeing anything but evil in this potential poison, will find little to disagree. But it is probable that not all will share in Professor Starling's lyrical outburst over alcohol as the true root of faith, hope, and charity. Undoubtedly, alcohol lessens prudence, and the unpopularity of that virtue is certainly due to its all too frequent synonymy with self-interest and selfish pleasure.

If we are convinced by the reasoning and evidence of this book, our views on the expediency of various legislative proposals can but be affected. The confirmed teetotaller and prohibitionist will probably remain unconverted. But, for others, the problem will shape itself thus: how best to remove from the mentally unstable and those of weak will the temptation, and even the possibility, of persistent self-poisoning, without unduly interfering with the liberty of the normal adult individual to make moderate use of a discovery which man has, from the earliest historic times, employed to add to his happiness, and to assist him in his perpetual work of adaptation to a none too easily endurable environment.

HARRY ROBERTS.

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## FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

## VARIABLE-DIVIDEND SECURITIES.

THE recent rise in cotton prices and the generally increasing activity in that trade have been reflected in the markets for Egyptian securities and the shares of the leading textile companies. Prominent among the former is the rise, since the account ended November 13th, in Kassala Cotton shares, which have risen from 15s. 3d. to 18s. Sudan Plantations have also benefited from the increased attention which has been given to Egyptians as a group, the shares having come up from 6 1-16 on November 13th to about 6 1/2 now. Egyptian Bank shares have similarly improved. On November 13th National Bank of Egypt shares were quoted at 23 1/2; they are now 24 1/2; whilst Agricultural Bank of Egypt £5 shares at 7 1-16 show a rise of 5-16 as compared with the quotation a month ago. The movement in British textile companies' shares since the make-up on November 13th last is shown below:—

Lowest price 1923.	Share.	Make-up Nov. 13th.	Price Now.
s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
42 0	Bleachers	46 6	48 0
46 9	Bradford Dyers	56 9	59 0
21 9	Calico Printers	27 0	29 6
62 6	J. & P. Coats	63 6	64 3xd
57 0	Courtaulds	59 6	64 3
46 3	English Sewing Cotton	47 0	49 0
41 9	Fine Cotton Spinners	48 3	48 6xd
24 7 1/2	Listers	25 6	27 3

It will be seen that the rise during the month has been very general, and that the present level of prices is considerably above the lowest of the year. Even now, however, there is not one of the shares in the above list which is yet on a level with the best price touched in 1923. During the spring, when trade was improving, the upward movement in prices proceeded rather faster. A reaction set in, trade proved disappointing, and quotations receded rather sharply. For the sake of clarity the highest prices of the year have been omitted from the above table, but it may be of interest to give them here. They are as follows: Bleachers, 52s. 10 1/2d.; Bradford Dyers, 65s.; Calico Printers, 30s. 6d.; J. & P. Coats, 70s. 6d.; Courtaulds, 74s.; English Sewing Cotton, 54s. 6d.; Fine Cotton Spinners, 55s. 3d.; and Listers, 34s. 6d.

Readers of THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM will recall the lists of Hotel Shares and Tin Shares given a short time ago on this page. The movement since is shown below:—

Hotel Shares.	Lowest this Year.	In "Nation" Oct. 13.	Now.
Carlton Hotels	14/6	22/-	25/-
Burlington Ord.	7/6	15/-	16/3
Frederick Pref.	6 1-16	7 1/2	7 1/2
Savoy Ord.	18/9	25/3	27/-

Only a few of the tin shares need be given; sufficient to show the further rise (which has been general) in sympathy with another big jump in the metal from about £220 a ton to about £237 per ton:—

Share.	Make-up Nov. 12.	Now.	Share.	Make-up Nov. 12.	Now.
Ropp Tin	11/0	11/6xd	Pahang	9/3	10/9xd
Binichi	7/9	8/6	Malayan Tin	38/1 1/2	41/6
Ipoh	17/0	18/3	Mongu	12/9	14/-

A correspondent who asked whether he should "invest" some money in this class of share will perhaps not be pleased with the advice that he should not do so, seeing that in all cases prices already show a very good profit in the space of a month. But shares of this kind are of necessity a mere speculation and not at all the sort of security for anyone who wants a safe place for his savings. Sooner or later prices will come down again. The market for the metal is highly sensitive, and it is doubtful whether the shares could stand up against a severe reaction in the price of tin, such as was witnessed in the early part of this year.

L. D. W.



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